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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

MR. CHAMBERLAIN won an easy victory in the vote of censure debate on Monday. But the House of Commons is not the country, and the result of the West Fulham by-election is an ominous answer to the claim that the Government's foreign policy commands the general assent of the electorate. No doubt domestic affairs bulked large with many of the electors. But it was the foreign issue that was dominant in the propaganda of both the candidates; the Conservatives themselves insisted on that throughout the contest, and polling took place to the accompaniment of the gunfire and bombs in Catalonia. Dr. Summerskill's majority was 1,421 in a total poll of something under 32,000, as against the Tory majority of 3,483 at the last election. It is ludicrous to suggest, as do some of the Government apologists, that this result is due simply to "the Opposition campaign of misrepresentation" of Mr. Chamberlain's policy. The facts speak for themselves, and their meaning—and the disastrous consequences they portend to this country and to the world at large—can be read by the man-in-the-street as well as by Mr. Eden and Mr. Churchill and other Tories who have turned against the Government.

M. Blum Proposes

The financial proposals announced by M. Blum on Monday are well conceived, uncompromising and, in all probability, fatal to his Government. The Bill which he has introduced simply authorises the adoption, until July 1st, of "essential measures" to be taken by decree; but the programme is outlined in an accompanying memorandum. The most important items are a capital levy rising from 4 to 17 per cent. (and payable in one, four or ten years) on personal fortunes in excess of approximately £1,000; abolition of bearer bonds and their replacement by registered stock less convenient for purposes of tax evasion; centralisation of all foreign exchange dealings at the Bank of France; higher taxes on large incomes and a special tax on armament profits; suspension of the Sinking Fund for two years. In addition, to meet the Treasury's immediate needs, the gold holding of the Bank of France would be revalued at current rates and the "profit" placed at the Government's disposal. The chances of the Bill's passage are remote. The Finance Committee of the Chamber adopted it by 25 votes to 18, and M. Blum secured for it on Wednesday a majority of 310 votes to 250 in the Chamber itself. The proposals, however, for the capital levy and the modified form of exchange control are anathema to the Radicals, two-thirds of whose numbers in the Senate have announced un-

compromising opposition to the Bill. There seems little doubt that this week-end will see France once more without a Government, and the problem whether M. Blum's probable successor, M. Daladier, will be supported by a fresh Popular Front combination or by a Centre Government without Socialist support, awaits solution.

Nazis and Catholics

Cardinal Innitzer, the Archbishop of Vienna, went to Rome on Tuesday to see the Pope, but his visit has not done much to settle the controversy stirred up by his applause of Hitler's coup in Austria. His welcome to the arch-enemies of the Church and his advice to his flock to vote " Yes " in the coming plebiscite were a shock to Catholics at home and abroad. The criticism of him on the Vatican broadcast last Friday was a counter-shock to the Nazis. This broadcast was promptly declared to be " quite unofficial " by the Papal authorities ; the Jesuit priest responsible for it had apparently avoided the eye of the Cardinal Secretary of State—a rather remarkable avoidance, one would have thought, in so important a matter. But if the Vatican has disapproved its broadcaster, it has not approved Cardinal Innitzer : what he did was also done without any Papal authorisation. It is suggested now that Cardinal Innitzer has some assurance, or hope of an assurance, from the Nazi Government about the relations of the Church and the State, and that this was the reason for his readiness to cry " Heil Hitler ! " But there is no public confirmation of this. All that we have got is a new statement by the Cardinal in which he explains that his enthusiasm for the Nazis must not be taken as derogatory to the laws of God, the liberty of the Church or the rights of the Holy See.

The Egyptian Landslide

The general election in Egypt has resulted in a spectacular, and indeed astonishing, defeat of the Wafdists. Up till a few weeks ago they were the only party that counted in the country, and they held a couple of hundred out of the 230 seats in the Chamber. Now they are reduced to a bare dozen, and among the defeated candidates are Nahas Pasha himself and his lieutenant Makram Pasha, the late Minister of Finance. This extraordinary collapse must be attributed in large part to intimidation and trickery at the polls. It is said that Mahmoud Pasha, the Prime Minister, had insisted that the elections should be free and fairly conducted ; but there is abundant evidence that his orders were widely disregarded. But it is clear also that this was not the sole cause of the defeat. The Wafd's stock had fallen in the country since Nahas's triumph last year, and the Party was weakened in the recent crisis by the secession of the Dissidents under Dr. Ahmed Maher and Nokrashi Pasha (who have actually won 79 seats). It was bad tactics on Nahas's part to press his dispute with the Palace to extremes ; he evidently overestimated his own strength and underestimated the popularity of the young king. The Wafd will doubtless recover in time from this blow, but for the moment Mahmoud Pasha is in a strong position. His friends believe that he will carry out his " Liberal " (which is not a very radical) programme ; and as regards foreign policy, no one doubts his intention to maintain the best relations with Great Britain.

Nationalist Policy in S. Africa

A general election is looming ahead in South Africa, and Dr. Malan, the leader of the Nationalists, the main Opposition party, has just announced the programme on which he is going to fight. It is a deplorable document, but it will doubtless win a good deal of support—the Nationalists are confident and aggressive, and the Government's stock has fallen of late. Dr. Malan aims at " self-sufficiency "—whatever that may mean in the South African Union. He wants independence—a republic, as soon as the people will give a clear mandate for it. Meanwhile he will get rid of the dominance of foreign banks and foreign shipping lines. The farmers (who, of course, are his principal backers) are to be vigorously assisted, while the gold mines are to be more heavily taxed. The poorer whites are offered a sop in the shape of more generous social services. The Natives and the Cape coloured people are to be further repressed ; Jews are to be kept out. This programme, with its anti-British, anti-Native, anti-Semitic policy, reveals the intransigent Afrikaner at his worst. If a serious attempt were made to carry it out, it might well, as the *Cape Times* observes, plunge South Africa into civil war.

The C.C.C. Reports Progress

President Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps has just celebrated its fifth anniversary. During its brief existence it has spent nearly two thousand million dollars and provided employment for well over two million young men. Nor has it simply employed people who would otherwise have been out of work. It has taught 65,000 illiterates to read and write, and has done an immense amount of education and craft training. When its original mandate was about to expire, the President wanted Congress to make it permanent ; but in face of the campaign now in progress against every aspect of the New Deal he was able only to secure its renewal for a further three years. The main work of the C.C.C. has been the preservation of forests and woodlands and of agricultural land threatened by erosion. This is generally agreed to have been of great national value ; and the C.C.C. has also been a great social asset in providing useful employment and training for young men from 18 to 23 years of age belonging mainly to households in receipt of some form of public relief. Of all the New Deal experiments it has come in for the least criticism, because it has solved for a key section of the workless the problem of providing really useful employment without serious conflict with any vested interest. Of course, America offers far better opportunities than Great Britain for work of this kind ; but in view of the tragic record of unemployment among our young men the Ministry of Labour might well consider the possibility of taking a leaf—even a small one—out of Mr. Roosevelt's book.

The A.E.U. Asks Awkward Questions

The Amalgamated Engineering Union has brought a refreshing note of realism into the discussions which Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Thomas Inskip are conducting with the Trade Unions and the employers. It has ventured to ask the Government to define the purpose for which it requires the armaments the Trade Unions are asked to help in speeding up. For an imperial war after

Europe has been allowed to go to the Nazis and Britain has no allies left? It suits Mr. Chamberlain not to say too much about his ends, but to concentrate on a demand that all patriotic persons shall rally round in order to supply him with the means. Naturally, the engineers are also concerned about the industrial aspects of dilution; their experience in the last war taught them clearly enough that Trade Union regulations, once abrogated, can never be fully restored, whatever pledges may be given at the time. Workshop methods change, and the old methods cannot be put back when new machinery has been installed. They have also learnt to regard not without scepticism promises that excessive profits will not be allowed. The engineering employers, with no such misgivings to overcome, are naturally quite ready to promise the Government their collaboration—which amounts to saying that they are quite ready to meet the Trade Unions and demand dilution and any other concessions they feel like asking for under cover of national emergency.

British Films

Now that the 1938 Films Act has become law, two things only are needed for the establishment of a British producing industry—directors of ability and capital. Except for the production of "shorts," there are no signs of either. In its final form the Act embodies the terms on which Hollywood is to be permitted to have its way with that somewhat shop-soiled virgin, the British film. The American renter—*anglicé*, wholesale distributor—in this country must fill half his stipulated quota of film footage with pictures made in this country and each costing a minimum of £15,000 each. He can relieve himself of the remaining half of his quota by making here films costing a minimum of £75,000. These will count treble their footage. Alternatively, if he buys for £30,000 the American rights of a picture made here, this will count double in footage for quota purposes. Some renters may prefer to waste so many thousand pounds in making "minimum" quota pictures, the costs of which it will not be difficult to misrepresent. Others will doubtless use British studios to manufacture part of the output of first-feature films which their controlling company requires for the American market. This will benefit the employment of local technicians and studio hands but it will do nothing to create distinctively British films.

The Coal Bill—Nem. Con.

The Coal Bill has gone through the House of Commons without a third reading division. Labour Party spokesmen described it as better than nothing; but we very much doubt whether, on balance, it really is. The unification of royalties is a step forward; but the compulsory amalgamation provisions have been reduced to a form in which they will be unworkable except when all the important vested interests are agreed. They are now such that they may be used to help a great combine to buy out a smaller neighbour, but are most unlikely to be effective where any big concern is hostile. They will accordingly tend to strengthen the monopolistic practices inherent in the system of output regulation, without providing for any effective public control over the policy or development of the industry. It is easy enough to understand why the miners' M.P.s, despairing of any effective reorganisation, cling to the monopolistic regulation of output as a means of safeguarding wages, and prefer even the Bill as it stands to no Bill at all. But from the public standpoint it is a dangerous measure, because it perpetuates and strengthens the policy of raising prices by counting on artificial scarcity, and still further entrenches the vested interests of the larger colliery owners. The only way of cleaning up the coal industry is to nationalise it outright.

British Shipping in the Boom

Even the Chamber of Shipping admits in its annual report that in 1937 freights were high enough not only to cover current depreciation and allow "a fair return on capital," but also to contribute towards making good arrears of depreciation accumulated during the depression. But the Chamber is not happy about the present or the future. It complains that shipbuilding and shiprepairing costs have risen during the past two years by 40 per cent.—which looks as if someone is doing very nicely. It also points out that nothing has been done to arrest the decline in the proportion of total world tonnage owned by British shipowners, which stands at 28 per cent. as compared with 44 per cent. in 1914. Over 40 per cent. of both entrances and clearances of shipping engaged in overseas trade in 1937 was accounted for by foreign vessels. British coasting trade, however, is almost up to the 1914 level, though even here the Chamber complains of the incursion of small Dutch vessels, which are doing a rapidly growing amount of carrying between British ports. In sum, all this amounts to saying that last year British shipowners were earning very nice profits, but that these depended increasingly on high freight rates rather than on the competitive superiority of British shipping.

Carbide and the Highlands

For the third time, with increasing decision, the House of Commons has rejected the Caledonian Power Bill, which would have authorised the British Oxygen Company to convert Glen Garry and Glen Moriston into a catchment area for three hydro-electric generating stations to feed a large calcium carbide plant at Corpach on Loch Linuhe. The case against the Bill was overwhelming. Let it be conceded that, as a precaution against war, it is desirable to substitute home-produced supplies of carbide for imports from Norway; there is no valid reason why the electricity required should not be generated by coal. The Highland scheme would have devastated over 300 square miles of lovely country; it would have given permanent employment to 400 workers at most, at the cost of damaging seriously the amenities and drainage system of Inverness and the livelihood of 150 Moray Firth salmon-net fishermen. It would have taken over four years to complete—a period which destroyed the "national emergency" argument—and, when completed, it would have robbed the Highlands of water-power needed for any rational scheme of Scottish development. The Company is going ahead with the establishment of a coal-fired plant at Port Talbot. If further domestic supplies of carbide are essential, a further plant might well be erected in the Lanarkshire coalfield, where ample supplies of fuel and unemployed labour are available.

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THE FOLLY OF BRITAIN

To the British and French Governments the Spanish Republic has addressed a last appeal, as moving as it is courteous, against " the profound and unbearable injustice" it has suffered. One of these Governments is hopelessly weak; the other is pursuing a policy which makes it deaf to any appeal from the friends of democracy, though ready enough to listen to its enemies.

It would be easy enough to draw from a military situation that looks desperate a too logical conclusion. Spaniards in such a case as this do not surrender to logic. They rally slowly, but they never fight so well as when their backs are to the wall. They have been driven by the enemy's command of the air to fight a series of rear-guard actions that seem as if they must end in the sea. Yet there is evidence that their *morale* is still unbroken. There is no sign of disunity in Barcelona, where the Cabinet has been recast with Dr. Negrin taking the place of Señor Prieto as Minister of Defence. Fewer than 200 men among the 6,000 who escaped across the French border to Luchon elected to return to their homes in Franco's territory; the rest, who can have had few illusions, voted individually before French officials to go back to Catalonia and continue the struggle with their shot-guns and knives. There is spirit left in the more distant regions of the Peninsula for two counter-offensives, while Barcelona makes ready to emulate Madrid. This Republic might even yet be saved if we could end the monstrous injustice that refused it arms, if in Paris or in London there survived either a sense of justice or a more far-sighted concern for our own safety.

What actually confronts us is a new phase of the Tory policy of one-sided intervention. We do not accept as final or authentic the versions of the Anglo-Italian Agreement that have leaked into the press. But on the main matter that concerns us we take them to be accurate. Mr. Chamberlain has dropped all pretence that he still expects (if he ever did so) a withdrawal of Italy's troops and air squadrons before the two dictators have won their campaign in the Peninsula. In effect he has given them his tacit permission to finish their work. In anticipation of that day the Agreement, for what it may be worth, is ready, and will come into force when the Italian troops are withdrawn. Does this mean that Downing Street will recognise one of Mussolini's lawless conquests, if he abandons the other? That would be an extremely simple interpretation.

We never supposed that Italian troops in the sense of a permanent garrison of mass formations were likely to remain for ever in Spain. The probability is, rather, that military " advisers," " instructors," " technicians," and organisers of one service or another, both civilians and soldiers, both Italians and Germans, will remain in large numbers—more especially the latter. Every civilian of a totalitarian State who works abroad is as much the agent of its Government as are its consuls and its soldiers. Of course, Italy will not annex or even occupy Majorca, but it will be astonishing if she fails to retain there, and at points on the mainland, her leased aerodromes or harbours or fuelling stations, camouflaged for civilian uses. German engineers are already fortifying the line of the Pyrenees, as we gather from the protests at public meetings of the Radical Party on the French side: they are also constructing a naval base at Pasajes on the Basque Coast. The plight of Spain will resemble that of Turkey on the eve of the Great War. Germany had no garrison there. But the Turks drew from their secret ally their military material and their military science, while all their economic life was permeated by German traders and concession-holders. In addition, Spain's mineral resources will be mortgaged to pay for the arms she has received, while her political life will be modelled, under foreign instructors, on the Fascist or Nazi plan. It should not be forgotten that Mussolini, as captured documents prove, began to arm and subsidise the extremer Spanish Right as far back as 1934, and that Germany had her grip on the Spanish press long before Franco rebelled.

Mr. Chamberlain is a simpler person than we suppose, if he really believes that a relatively backward country becomes a vassal or a colony only when it is occupied or annexed. Mussolini will have the kind of control of Spain that he had of Austria under Dollfuss and Schuschnigg. He exercised it through its Church, and its subsidised party formations, while he defended its " independence " from the Brenner Pass. So far from buying Mussolini out of Spain by recognising the conquest of Abyssinia, Mr. Chamberlain is, we take it, attempting to buy Italy out of the Axis by conniving at her conquest of Spain. We do not dispute that for a short time Rome may be willing to take what it can get by playing a double game with London and Berlin. It is fairly clear that Hitler cannot have secured Mussolini's previous consent to the *Anschluss*, and it is significant that the first mechanised divisions which invaded Austria made not for Vienna but for the Brenner Pass. Italy rather than the Western Powers was the defeated party in this operation. The Duce took this blow with a wry smile, but presumably he felt much that he was too wise to say. On such hidden resentments it may be easy to play. There is no doubt that the Roman Empire is in difficulties in Abyssinia. The megalomania of recent years has exhausted the capital reserves of a relatively poor country, and its standard of life has sunk to a dangerously low level. If this second Gentleman's Agreement should open the road to the City's bank parlours, it will be well worth Mussolini's while to behave in Libya, Palestine and Arabia with exemplary discretion for some appreciable length of time. But, in the long run, the ambitions of the revived Roman Empire can be realised only with the aid of Berlin and only against London and Paris. Mr. Chamberlain may barter the freedom of Spaniards and Abyssinians against this temporary gentleman's friendship, but it is not in his power to bestow what Italian Imperialists thirst to acquire. Can a Tory Prime Minister allow the Mediterranean to become their *mare nostrum*, or surrender Tunis, Syria or Egypt? If ever these prizes should fall to Rome it would presumably be as Italy's share in a victorious war waged by the Axis against the Western Powers.

We question, then, whether this flirtation with Rome is likely to break the Axis, though it may complicate its smooth revolutions for a short time. If it could succeed, it would represent not a victory for order and law, not a step towards the restoration of collective security, but merely a temporary score in the old-world game of the Balance of Power. No gain to the idea of the Great Society can come by enlisting a Power fresh from the rape

of Abyssinia and the overthrow of Spanish democracy. The utmost that might be attained would be that the two Western Empires would feel somewhat more secure in their control of Northern Africa and the Middle East. In their efforts to deny to Germany the wheat of Hungary and the oil of Rumania they might buy the neutrality, if not the support, of Italy. Of the two Fascist Powers one would be, all told, rather stronger than it is to-day and the other rather weaker. The singularity of this reasoning is that the Foreign Office appears to assume that Italian Fascism must be a permanent institution. If in fact, as we believe, the Duce is in grave danger because he has overreached himself in Abyssinia and Spain, and undermined the economic life of the Italian people, the obvious course would be, if not to push him over the precipice, at least to let him fall. There lies the surest way of breaking the Axis and detaching from Berlin this dictator's eight million bayonets and his aeroplanes that "darken the sun." For if Fascism should totter in Italy to its fall, the regime that would ultimately replace it would be in all probability some incarnation of the People's Front idea, which would break with Germany and rally to the Western Democracies. But class solidarity, fear of the "Reds" and the tradition of an out-of-date diplomacy —well understood to be out of date by the dictators—forbid our rulers to further or even to await this fortunate solution.

Even now it is not necessarily too late to deal to the Fascist idea in general, and to Italian Fascism in particular, a blow in Spain that might be mortal. The man-power of the Republic is adequate to recover its territory, if it could count on a degree of support from France and this country equal to the support that Franco has received from Germany and Italy. It is an open secret that the French General Staff wishes to give this aid, and has been seriously discussing the dispatch not merely of arms but of men into Catalonia. It reckons that without trained reserves of men and stores of raw materials and food, Germany cannot yet face a major war. Spain, at the doors of France and open to the sea, offers an incomparably more propitious field to the Western Powers, if ever they mean to make a stand, than Czechoslovakia. Prague, indeed, might be defended better in Barcelona than on the slopes of the Sudeten range. All that this country need contribute is a guarantee to stand by France while she saves herself from complete encirclement. By making a stand precisely here and now the Western Powers would secure their own strategical advantage against any later crisis. Better still, they would give a proof of solidarity that would deter the dictators from future effort to overwhelm them in isolation. Finally, a defeat in Spain would end Fascism in Italy.

But to outline such a plan is already to dismiss it. Mr. Chamberlain will not guarantee France in such an action for her own safety. On the contrary, he has given Italy his tacit consent for the completion of her work. The Opposition wastes its energy when it appeals to him and argues with him. So long as Mr. Eden was at the Foreign Office it was excusable to nourish false hopes of a revision of policy in Spain and elsewhere. To-day we can no longer doubt that Mussolini was right when he boasted that "Chamberlain will let me win the Spanish war and then pay me to take my troops out of Spain".

ABYSSINIA UNCONQUERED

ONE of the ablest European diplomats said to me not long ago that, if the League sanctions against Italy had succeeded, it would have meant the end of dictatorships in Europe. They did not succeed because those who controlled our destinies—amongst them Mr. Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir Robert Vansittart and M. Laval—never, at any time, intended to make them succeed and agreed to limit them to measures that would, they knew, be ineffective as a means of stopping the aggression against Abyssinia. This is not even yet generally understood, though the evidence is overwhelming. They realised that the complete failure of the attack on Abyssinia would ruin Mussolini's prestige in Italy and mean his downfall and the end of the Fascist regime. That they never desired; they feared that Italy would go "Bolshevik," that is to say, that the Fascist regime would be succeeded, sooner or later, if not at once, by a regime under the control of organised labour. They regarded sanctions as a help to a bargain: the war, they thought, would go on for a long time and we could intervene to safeguard our own interests when Mussolini was in difficulties. The attitude of the British Government was accurately described by the Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* on November 4, 1935. He wrote:

> At no time was the efficacy of economic sanctions overrated here—they have all along been regarded as a help towards shortening the war and not as a means of bringing it to an end within a given period. But it is believed that the pressure of sanctions will be rather severe and, while it is clearly impossible to foretell when it will make itself widely felt in Italy, it is hoped that the mere fact that sanctions have worked at all and can be made to go on working will create a new situation in which the effort to negotiate a settlement can be resumed. . . . There is some confidence here that it will be possible to find a compromise acceptable to Geneva, Addis Ababa and Rome by about February or March.

If the Government and the Foreign Office really hoped for, a compromise acceptable to Geneva, Addis Ababa and Rome by February or March, 1936 or, indeed, ever, their faith must have been stronger than their reason. But, in fact, it had already been decided in September, 1935, to negotiate a settlement acceptable to Mussolini immediately after the general election, and a "compromise" far from acceptable to Geneva or Addis Ababa was "found" on December 8th, 1935, twenty-four days after the general election and twenty days after economic sanctions had come into force.

It was not difficult to find the "compromise," for its main lines had been drafted by Sir Robert Vansittart in September, 1935, and were then known to M. Laval and, therefore, probably also to Mussolini. They were communicated by Mr. Baldwin at Aix-les-Bains in that month to the Count de Chambrun, then French ambassador to Rome. One day during the League Assembly in September, 1935, a French friend of mine, to whom I had said that I was convinced that the British Government were not sincere about sanctions, had adopted them merely to get votes in the election and would propose to drop them as soon as the election had been held, told me that he had had a conversation with M. Laval, who had said that British policy would change after the general election. I replied that I was not surprised for, as he knew, that was what I had always thought. My friend was rather uneasy at this confirmation of my hypothesis by the French Prime Minister, but he tried to hope that M. Laval's statement, categorical as it was, was only a belief inspired by his desires. On December 18th, 1935, when the Council of the league met at Geneva to inter the "Hoare-Laval" plan, I was standing with the same French friend in the *salle des pas perdus* of the Disarmament Annexe to the Secretariat when M. Laval came up the stairs. He beckoned to my friend, who had a short conversation with him and then came back and told me that M. Laval had said: "You see that I was right. I knew what I was talking about."

Once more the British Government are trying to save Mussolini, no doubt for the same reason as in 1935, and this

time Mussolini is badly in need of a saviour. The author of a recent article published in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION showed that the financial and economic situation of Italy is almost desperate and that, among other things, Franco owes the Italian Government a huge sum for war material which Mussolini can never hope to recover unless he keeps his hold on Spain. Since the article was published, Mussolini's authority and prestige in Italy have suffered a severe blow by the German annexation of Austria, which has caused profound resentment and alarm in Italy. The Italians see that their Duce has been duped and outwitted by Hitler. Furthermore, if the Italians knew the whole truth, they would know that their Abyssinian victory is a Pyrrhic one. Abyssinia is not yet conquered or anything like it, and British recognition of the conquest, if and when it comes, will not be the simple recognition of facts, but on the contrary a refusal to recognise them. Most of the facts are unknown in any country, for there are now few, if any, newspaper correspondents in Abyssinia and no correspondent would be allowed by the Italian authorities to publish accurate reports. Information about the Abyssinian situation has, however, reached *The New Statesman & Nation* from a source that makes it impossible to doubt its accuracy. Unless Mussolini gets help, he will find it difficult to hold Abyssinia except at the cost of sacrifices so intolerable that the Italian people, discontented as they already are, may ultimately revolt. When once confidence in a dictator is shaken, as confidence in Mussolini has been shaken by the annexation of Austria, he is starting on the downward path.

Mussolini's difficulties in Abyssinia are acute. He has been obliged to withdraw 10,000 Italian workmen because he could no longer feed or pay them and their places have been taken by Amharis, who are about as capable of making or keeping up roads as an infants' school would be. One of the chief reasons of the easy Italian victory was the lack of unity among the natives of Abyssinia arising from their racial and religious differences. Whole tribes were bought by the Italians and the Emperor's armies melted away like snow in a night. The Italian annexation and the foul methods employed by the Italians to retain their hold on the country have produced a measure of unity such as has never before existed. Christians, Moslems and Pagans have sunk their differences and the resistance to the Italian invaders is more extensive, more united and more effective than it has been at any time since the occupation. It is likely to be intensified during the coming rainy season. Before the war the Italians had recruited a large number of Abyssinians, especially from Gojjan in the west of the country, who were attracted by the pecuniary advantages offered them. They were trained in Libya and sent to Abyssinia when the war began. Large numbers of them have deserted and Abyssinians recruited for service in Libya have escaped and returned to Abyssinia to aid their fellow-countrymen. Moreover, many of the Eritrean troops in the Italian army have gone over to the Abyssinians, and all these desertions are increasing.

The Abyssinians are gaining ground and their resistance is hardening. The trained Abyssinian and Eritrean deserters are teaching them the use of modern weapons, of which they were completely ignorant, and they are becoming less and less afraid of the Italians. Even air raids have much less effect than was formerly the case, although great aerial activity continues on the part of the Italians. If the Abyssinians could obtain adequate supplies of arms and war material, they might well succeed ultimately in driving the Italians out of Abyssinia. News was received in London on April 1st that early in March about 5,000 Italian troops were sent to guard the road between Dessie and Addis Ababa, which is constantly harassed by the Abyssinians. The Italians were surrounded, and great difficulty was being found in relieving the force. The *Times* reported on March 31st that Italian outposts had been attacked along the Sudan frontier in the north-west of Abyssinia. In the north there are revolts in Tembien and Sokota led by Dejamach Nailu Kebbede. In Gojjan in the west there have been revolts under Ras Nailu's grandson whose surrender with 1,000 men was reported in the *Times* of March 14th. In Shoa, in east Abyssinia, where the Abyssinians are led by Dejamach Fikre Mariam, the railway to Jibuti and the main road to the west are frequently cut. In Bako in the south there are revolts under Dejamach Bayena. In Gurafarda, Gimira and Kaffa in the south-west many Italian garrisons have had to be withdrawn and roads are unsafe. The Italian situation is best in Ogaden in south-east Abyssinia, where the occupation is assisted by transport of men and supplies through British Somaliland under the Anglo-Italian agreement of January, 1937; but, in general, the Italian administrative methods have so injured currency, productivity and trade that the costs of the occupation have been increased and its returns diminished.

There can be no doubt that the situation in Abyssinia is Mussolini's greatest anxiety and that it is a question of saving the situation "now or never." In these circumstances it is nothing short of an infamy that the British Government should be proposing to help him out of his difficulties, to recognise a "conquest" that has not yet been achieved and to assist him to achieve it. The formal recognition might have some effect on the moral of the Abyssinians, who are no doubt encouraged in their resistance by the refusal of England and France and so many other countries to recognise Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia, but far more important would be the effect of supplying Mussolini with money to complete the conquest. And what are we to get in return for an attempt, which may not even succeed, to bolster up a tottering dictator? An agreement with Mussolini's signature, which is not worth the ink with which it is written.

ROBERT DELL

FINANCING REARMAMENT

DURING the next fortnight the Chancellor of the Exchequer must make a decision on which much will depend. Are the acceleration and (it is safe to assume) the enlargement of Britain's rearmament programme to be paid for out of the proceeds of increased taxation, or by recourse to additional borrowing? The economic barometer is barely steady; last month's less than seasonal drop in unemployment and the almost uniform reports of dwindling orders received by civilian industry suggest that war-talk and political uncertainties are beginning seriously to restrict capitalist enterprise. Given the present state of entrepreneur psychology, a budget which laid fresh burdens on the taxpayer, direct or indirect, could hardly fail to be deflationary; and the dangers of deflation in present circumstances are being brought to Sir John Simon's notice by many counsellors. "Let the next generation pay for the security we are building for it"—thus, frankly *ad hominen*, moralises the Beaverbrook press, with an eye to advertisement revenues dependent on maintenance of high, current consumption. Even the *Times*, not conspicuous in the past for departures from the strait way of financial orthodoxy, argues strongly that any substantial increase of taxation would imperil the prosperity on which tax revenue commensurate with national needs depends.

Can the trick be done? Can the Chancellor continue to finance painless rearmament, and equal the "impressiveness" of Sir Thomas Inskip's programme "completed without compulsion" by meeting the bill without fresh taxes? Up to March 31st, when the nation's last financial year ended, the budgetary going was comparatively good. Last year's budget was based on the assumption that the final accounts would show a net increase of indebtedness to the tune of £80 millions. Having spent £16 millions less on Defence, £21 millions less on Civil Services and nearly £8 millions less on Debt interest than was anticipated, Sir John Simon finds himself in the position of having "economised" to the extent of £45 millions. His revenue, thanks to unexpectedly large income-tax receipts, has surpassed estimate by nearly

£9 millions. Net result—setting £10½ millions of debt amortisation out of revenue against £65 millions raised on Defence Loan account—is that indebtedness in the first of the five years of the rearmament programme has grown by only £25½ millions out of the £400 millions authorised for the quinquennium.

For next year's rubber, however, the cards are not dealt so prettily. The revenue realised in 1937-38 was £872½ millions. Industrial profits, on which next year's assessments will be based, have risen; but security values, for death duty purposes, have fallen. Stamps are a declining source of revenue; sur-tax—thanks to evasion—is doing badly; Customs receipts are more likely to fall than rise. Unless he makes optimism the better part of honesty, Sir John can hardly rely on a "natural increment" of more than £10 millions from existing taxes. Add £20 millions for a full year's yield of last year's N.D.C. and 5*s.* income tax; and assume, say, £5 millions from further measures to close loopholes against tax evasion. The highest probable revenue figure —unless a windfall from some undisclosed Treasury surplus can be brought into account—is under £910 millions. Against this, the published Estimates total £786 millions. These provide nothing for the 1938 Naval building programme or for Civil contingencies; and it would be rash this year to count on unexpected savings in unemployment assistance expenditure. Add last year's provision for Debt, and a total of £1,021 millions is reached. Unless the accelerated rearmament time-table (announced since the Estimates were framed) is an empty profession of intention destined to remain unrealised, Supplementaries projected and probable should raise total expenditure to £1,040 millions, of which £90 millions, according to present plans, will be met by borrowing.

If the loan programme is not modified, the budget eventually will have to carry, on this calculation, £950 millions, or £40 millions more than the maximum revenue which appears to be in sight. To bridge this gap by taxation would mean an additional 6*d.* on income tax, *plus* other increases of indirect taxes. For the first budget of a Chancellor sensible of doubts as to his personal popularity this would be a disagreeable menu—to say nothing of the reluctance of the Government to accentuate business recession at a time when the psychological moment for an election is already being discussed by the Party managers. *Pour décourager les autres*—meaning Hitler and Mussolini—minor additions to taxes may well be made as a token of Britain's patriotism and taxable capacity. But the omens are that borrowing—overt or covert—will serve to tide over next year's estimated deficit. If so, the Government will be following a policy electorally attractive and economically plausible, but fraught with risks from the long-range standpoint. Who is to pay the flute-players on later stages of Vickers' primrose path, when the trade cycle—on present showing—will have turned more decisively downwards, and revenue will be shrinking while expenditure rises to a still distant peak? Echo answers: "inflation." The survivors of the next war will need to have minds above price indices.

BACK TO THE WALL IN SPAIN

I HAD only to enter the outskirts of Barcelona to become calm and reassured. It was like driving into Madrid in the old days when its fate still seemed to hang in the balance: the moment one saw the faces of the people and the aspect of the streets one felt that the capital was solid.

The other evening a well-known American novelist and staunch friend of the Loyalists telephoned from Paris to ask whether he should come to Spain immediately so as to be on hand before the end, or stay abroad another week to do some work. This is the impression most people outside have. The calculation omits the untapped resistance of the Spanish people as well as Franco's shortage of infantry. It is not a matter of days or of a few weeks. This week an autobus service to Madrid is being inaugurated. Talented soldiers are matriculating in officers' training schools. An interesting suggestion has been advanced to establish a secondary authority at Albacete to direct the war in the Madrid sector, Andalusia and Estremadura in case the rebels reach the Levant sea coast and cut off Catalonia. The new U.G.T.-C.N.T. alliance is taking steps to speed up armaments production. Youth, stirred as never before by the Barcelona bombings and by the Italo-Moorish Aragon offensive, is volunteering in masses for the army. There are already enough of them for two divisions; this is only a beginning. Hundreds of building workers are being mobilised to construct another defence line in Catalonia. It commences to feel something like Madrid in November and December, 1936. A prominent Catalan said recently: "We go from here to the cemetery." The Catalans have at last been aroused. The first effect of the Barcelona air raids of March 16th, 17th and 18th was panic. Women with children refused for 48 hours to leave the underground. Hundreds of thousands of citizens moved into the surrounding hills. Workers failed to report at their benches. But soon the excitement died down. Nobody now looks up into the blue, sunny sky. To-day, resentment, bitterness and hate are operating. A Spanish woman said to me: "Down at the Calle Cortes Catalanas, where bombs fell into two apartment houses, I walked through pools of human blood and stepped warily lest I tread on an arm or a body or a baby's leg." After such experience one's outlook on life and the value one puts on one's own life change. Under my window at this moment thousands of Barcelonans are promenading leisurely, the men hatless and coatless, women meticulously made-up, couples laughing, a father and mother wheeling a perambulator. Their demeanour seems to reflect confidence mixed with some aloofness. Most of them are fighting or have members of their families at the front or active in political parties and Trade Unions or serving in the Government or participating in factory committee management, peasant collectives, etc. They know that thousands of their kind who fail to escape are executed or imprisoned by Franco when he occupies Loyalist territory. But if the Spanish Republic succumbs altogether, there will be no escape. Only the few could get into France and these would scarcely be workers and their kin. It is far nobler to die fighting than before a firing squad, and the Spaniard cares a great deal about nobility and about the style as well as the effect of an act. The idea is not merely to kill the bull; the killing thrusts must be clean and graceful.

Those who fight Fascism do not give up the struggle. The German Socialist or Communist or Catholic or pacifist who distributes leaflets surreptitiously or organises a lightning strike does Hitler much less harm than the machine-gunner in the Aragon trenches, yet he risks his life to aim a weak shaft at medievalism in modern dress. Spain is part of the war against a universal enemy. The battle shifts and assumes new form, but never ends. The purpose is to enfeeble and harass the foe and to continue the attack now with guns, now with speeches, food collections, boycotts, political manifestations, etc. Those who can, carry on according to their best abilities. There is no surrender. In a dire moment here a few timorous souls, not actuated by this psychology of permanent struggle, reacted favourably to a foreign suggestion for an armistice. But Trade Unionists, Socialists, Anarchists and Communists, joined by armed Assault Guard Police, paraded in thousands to support the Prime Minister's intransigence. The compromise mood thereupon quickly disappeared. Negrin has risen enormously in stature. At 45, he is one of Europe's outstanding statesmen with a quickness of perception and action remarkable in a Spaniard. He dominates the scene. The waverers are awed by his energy and undeviating purpose.

The situation, nevertheless, remains critical. If the Government can hold out for six weeks longer, it will hold out much longer. But to do this the Republic must literally oppose a wall of human flesh to the steel and explosives of the rebels.

The Spanish people is paying with a heavy toll of lives for the arms deficiency which " non-intervention " has imposed upon it. In this bitter, unequal struggle, one might think that fairness and the sporting spirit alone would persuade foreign democracies to let the Spanish nation have the weapons with which to defend itself. As it is, the Loyalists cannot dispute the Fascists' domination of the air nor silence Franco's guns. The Government's air force is outnumbered eight to one. Twelve Loyalist pursuit planes went out last week to machine-gun a Moorish cavalry column. They did their work well until a large bomber of a hitherto unobserved type appeared. The pursuit planes threw themselves at it, and immediately 110 enemy fighters swooped down upon them from a higher level. Six little Chatos were shot down and six escaped.

No troops will stand indefinitely when score upon score of giant air fortresses bomb them all day without respite while cannons pour torrents of shells into their trenches. It is a miracle that the loyal army has any resistance and combativeness left in it at all. Some days the Republican troops fight like heroes and on others they run like hares. In the worst period —at Alcaniz and Caspe—many officers fled, and the political commissars of the army, their prerogatives reduced by Prieto's decrees of last autumn, lacked sufficient authority to stem the rout. Trade Union and party leaders were rushed to the front, and they succeeded in re-establishing the morale which, on most other occasions, has been mountain-high. Much could be achieved by more efficient organisation, by better transport—there is a serious shortage of trucks—by greater cohesion within the federal coalition. Democratic methods, scarcely infringed upon by war-time conditions, persist to invigorate but often to hamper the prosecution of the war. The nonchalance and poise of the Spaniard in crisis is an asset not unmixed with self-inflicted woes. He tolerates intolerable obstacles because it is not yet 11.45 by his watch. It is strange and good that life in Loyalist Spain is so relatively normal. But it is too normal. There is too little fever and too much indifference.

One development has taken place which is of importance in the present tense period. The Anarchists are co-operating more and obstructing less. They have learned responsibility and are forsaking their traditional policy of " the discipline of indiscipline " for disciplined discipline. The Popular Front, which won a majority of Cortes seats in the last elections—February 16th, 1936—although the Anarchists did not vote, decided this week to admit the C.N.T. into its midst. Loyalist Spain accordingly represents a solid social bloc from bourgeois and Catholic nationalists to Communists and Anarchists. Not all Anarchists, to be sure, have been transformed, but even a turn in the right direction is encouraging. If the war lasts long enough we may witness an interesting metamorphosis of Anarchism.

Nothing which a truce between parties, perfect organisation and impeccable military guidance might do, however, could compensate for the rebels' overwhelming superiority in aviation and artillery. Anxious to close the war, Italy and Germany have during the last six weeks sent into Spain huge quantities of their most modern equipment. Where else would Franco get 180 planes to send over the little town of Fraga on an afternoon, while intense fighting on the ground and in the air was proceeding at a dozen other points on the Aragon front alone? For internal political reasons Mussolini has boasted of this intervention with cynical disregard for the sight and hearing of democratic statesmen. Franco's armaments, however, are disproportionate to his man-power, and he must frequently halt his advance and bring up fresh troops to occupy evacuated districts. He has, it is reported, 100,000 Italians—60,000 of the regular army and 40,000 Blackshirts—60,000 Moors, most of them young and some from French Morocco, and 50,000 Spaniards on whom he can rely. This infantry enjoys the advantage of being able to march in after tons of bombs and shells have crumbled into dust every Loyalist defence. The Government's army is much larger and is fairly well supplied with rifles and machine guns, 30 per cent. of which are produced domestically. If Barcelona could purchase artillery and 200 planes abroad the war could not be lost for another year. Two hundred planes can make all the difference between victory and defeat for Spanish Fascism, between an encircled and protected France, between a menaced and secure Western Mediterranean for the British Empire, between a threatened and safer Czechoslovakia, between an encouraged and checked international Fascism, and between a black and brighter Europe. But in the entire democratic world there are no 200 airplanes for a cash buyer who wishes to safeguard hearth and home and national soil against invasion and reaction. It is not too late to mend this situation. The spirit here has not been broken even though the line has been in numerous places. The Spaniards are willing to fight on. They are prepared to submit to further under-nourishment, nervous strain and slaughter on the chance that certain countries will wake up before long and realise that the international war now being fought on Spanish territory is as much their concern as Spain's. Without foreign help in the near future the cause is desperate. A parallel with Madrid in 1936 is apt but as yet incomplete. Then the International Brigade and Soviet material helped the Loyalists to restore equilibrium and launch the formation of a new army. Now the International Brigade has dwindled to about five thousand effectives; fresh enlistments abroad average only four hundred a month. Moreover, much larger quantities of arms would be required to-day. The war has assumed a vaster scale.

LOUIS FISCHER

Barcelona, April 1

A LONDON DIARY

THE result of West Fulham is encouraging. It suggests that part at least of the vast incalculable floating opinion which is angry and bewildered by Mr. Chamberlain's policy is swinging over to Labour. But there is still a dangerous remainder which was too apathetic too vote. It is dangerous just because it is politically amorphous. For a variety of reasons a large part of this unattached opinion will not support Labour itself: it might respond to an authoritative joint platform of Labour, Liberals, recalcitrant Conservative and influential non-party people. In many constituencies this fusion is just happening: parties are forgotten and big joint meetings are organised, whether the official party organisations like it or not. *Reynolds*, which has been advocating a united Opposition, has received a remarkable, spontaneous response, not only in the Co-operative movement but also from local Labour Parties and Trade Union branches. The official Labour Party is hostile mainly, I think, because it suspects that Communists may be difficult to exclude if there is co-operation with Liberals. But there is co-operation with Liberals—West Fulham profited by the help of the Council of Action—and nothing can stop Communists working for the Labour Party if they insist on doing so. The right reply is a leadership which will make people forget that Communists exist—indeed, they are only politically significant because the Left is disunited. If nothing more is done from the Left to crystallise this disillusioned and yet eager multitude, we shall see attempts to mobilise it from very dangerous quarters.

* * *

The Fascists think the opportunity good, and I hear a good deal of revived Fascist activity. There is an odd gathering of influential Fascists at Lord Phillimore's house this week-end. I understand Mr. Lennox-Boyd was to be present, but am told that he cancelled the engagement. Other bodies are springing up: here is one founded in the north of England, the British Democratic Party—what will words be used for next?—which stands for an anti-Red programme which, when you examine it, turns out to bear a close relationship to Hitler's. I hear that behind this body stands our old friend the notorious Economic League.

My view that a large part of the electorate is simply bewildered about foreign affairs is confirmed by an interesting bit of work done by Tom Harrisson and his fellow "mass observers" during the West Fulham election. Their object has been to find out what part the issues discussed in party literature and on party platforms are playing in determining the attitude of the electorate. The barrage of literature has been immense: fifteen types of appeal have gone out; Fascists, Communists and Council of Action have all taken a hand as well as the official Parties. After studying the reports of about 5,000 conversations Mr. Harrisson discovers that only a minority will admit to being interested in foreign affairs and that the effect of the flood of literature was only very slightly to increase the percentage of interest, though it certainly increased the percentage of confusion. Here are some interesting sample conversations. A working man remarked: "No, there won't be a war. Look at all those suicides in Vienna." A working woman: "The country's in the hands of the Jews. My husband's as Red as can be." Another: "We shouldn't help France who are always bickering, but let the little nations quarrel among themselves." Best of all, a middle-aged woman: "I've great confidence in Chamberlain. A wonderful man for his age."

* * *

The most loathsome part of any dictatorship—and that is saying a lot—is the spying and "informing" that inevitably flourish under it. "Delation," you remember if you've ever read Tacitus, was the peculiar horror of the Roman Empire. But history has never before seen the terrorism of the informer brought to the pitch of perfection which the Nazis have achieved. It is the spy who has kept discontent underground in Germany: it is the spy system that prevents anyone telling the truth about anything to the nice young simple creatures who go to Germany now and come back and say that everything is lovely under the Nazis. A friend of mine who entertained a young German in England last summer tells me that he defended everything in Germany—with marked effect on the minds of young English people who met him—until the last night of his visit when he explained, in strict confidence, that he had been lying all the week, but dared not do anything else, because he knew that spies here would report back about his visit. That, of course, is the reason why all Germans abroad are now to be "registered"; Goebbels wants every German in every country of the world to be a Nazi agent, if not of his own free-will, then from terror of punishment if he blurts out an independent view.

* * *

Germans abroad are to be part of the Reich just as much as Germans at home. They are to spend their money to help Germany. Thus the registration forms now to be filled up by every German resident in England and delivered personally at the German Embassy contain the question: "Have you got a driving licence?" If the answer is in the affirmative, the consular official also enters the details of the car owned. If it is a British or American car, the German is told that he should transfer to a German car. The Nazi Government calculation is that they will be able in this way to persuade some 900 car owners to buy German models—which means usually to buy one of the cheap Opel cars which are now pouring into the British market. Many British people buy Opel cars in the belief that they are American (I bought a second-hand one myself last year!). They are in fact made in Germany by General Motors and exported under a profit-sharing agreement with the German Government. In the case of an Opel car costing £135, after deducting cost of duty, tyres, and commissions, there remains £70, of which about £15 goes to the United States and £50 to the German Government. I am not surprised to hear that British manufacturers are getting alarmed. In 1936 the average monthly number of German cars imported into England was 40, in 1937 it was 431, in 1938 (for January and February) it is 1,170 a month.

* * *

Here is another example to add to my list of strange decisions in the courts. The magistrate—I will not at the moment mention the place—is old and very deaf. A lad was brought before him for riding a cycle without a reflector. The magistrate said: "Very bad case, very bad case. Five pounds or fourteen days." The magistrates' clerk, cupping his hands, explained that the penalty was too heavy for cycling without a reflector. "Oh, that's the one, is it?" said the magistrate. "*I thought it was the next case.*"

* * *

You will have noticed that ex-President Hoover went to see Hitler a few weeks back. According to an interviewer he told the Führer that every day he stayed in dictatorship countries, the more fervently he believed in democracy. I am told now that he only went very reluctantly to see Hitler. He said: "Well, they tell me I'll have to go. I don't want to see Hitler for political reasons, or personal reasons, or ethical reasons, or aesthetic reasons, or moral reasons, or social reasons. And what other reasons are there?"

* * *

Here is a neat comment on the news that the Anglo-Italian Agreement is to be signed by Easter.

The Premier in his juggling act
Discloses, though he talks to mask it
That England's eggs, so far intact,
Are all in one Italian basket.

The Premier wears a Homburg hat,
Both hang upon a single peg;
He falls unless he pulls from that
A Mussolini Easter egg.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to "Mercury."

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

But the trouble is that Europe has become an obsession with Members of Parliament.—Mr. George Malcolm Thomson in *Evening Standard.*

"Had Hitler and Mussolini been cricketers I do not think we should have had all this trouble that is going on in Europe to-day," said Sir Francis Lacey, for 25 years Secretary of the M.C.C., speaking at the annual meeting of the Wiltshire County Cricket Club, of which he is President, at Trowbridge yesterday.—*Manchester Guardian.*

As Heaven is a Monarchy, I accept Monarchy as a part of my religion. I was taught that Lucifer who rebelled in Heaven is the spiritual ancestor of Republicanism.—Letter in *The British Lion.*

Fashionable ladies, why not have your little dog tinted to match your dress for special occasions? Lady has discovered process guaranteed harmless to the most delicate animal, prettiest pastel shades imaginable.—Advt. in *Daily Telegraph.*

I cannot too often express the appreciation and gratitude I feel to organisations of labour and trade unions. I wish I could say as much for the Parliamentary Labour Party. That party does not support the Government's rearmament policy because it does not support its foreign policy. If security is our object it does not matter what our foreign policy is.—Sir Thomas Inskip quoted in *Birmingham Post.*

Supporters of Mr. Busby, the Conservative candidate, are making every effort to see that the margin, however small, shall be on his side. Before he left for a tour of the division to-day, Mr. Busby received the following message from Mrs. Bower, wife of Commander Bower, the M.P. whose face was slapped in the House of Commons on Monday:

"Commander Bower had hoped to come and help, but is confined to bed in considerable pain. He asks me to say that Monday's incident in the House was an example of what may occur if the Socialists get into power in this country.—*Evening Standard.*

THE UNDERDOGS

II. The Long Unemployed.

In last week's article on *The Underdogs*, we stressed the urgent need for legislation to secure a tolerable minimum standard of wages for those workers who fall at present outside the scope either of Trade Boards or of any kind of Trade Union collective bargaining. Using the sample figures compiled by Sir William Beveridge's Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee, we showed that a substantial fraction of the fully adult men who become claimants to unemployment benefit have been previously working in jobs that cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as yielding even a barely sufficient minimum wage. These men may be better off, especially if they have young children, when they are drawing unemployment benefits than when they are in work—not because the benefits are too high, but because, on any reasonable showing, the wages are too low.

This conclusion is fully confirmed by the report, published last week under the auspices of the Pilgrim Trust,* of a sample investigation into the conditions of the "long unemployed"—that is, of men and women who, having been out of work continuously for over a year and having lost any rights to insurance benefit, are still being maintained under the Unemployment Assistance Board, with its household "Means Test" and its regular inquisition into the family circumstances of those concerned.

This "Pilgrim" Report, drawn up by a special group of full-time investigators and sponsored by Lord Macmillan and the Archbishop of York, is a most valuable and workmanlike objective survey. It covers only a "sample," and only a few districts; but these districts have been well selected to bring out different aspects of the problem of chronic unemployment, and the smallness of the sample has made it possible for each case to be individually studied. We have, therefore, a picture of a particular section of the workless workers in six centres—three "depressed areas" and three others—the Rhondda, Crook in Durham, and Blackburn on the one hand, and Liverpool, Deptford and Leicester on the other. The three former illustrate primarily what the report calls "industrial unemployment," or in other words unemployment which arises out of the conditions of the local demands of industry for labour, rather than out of any personal characteristics of the individuals who have been long out of work. The other three illustrate rather "residual unemployment"—the lack of work which persists, even in prosperous areas, and at times of booming trade, and is at any rate much more closely related to the personal qualities of the individuals who are out of work. Liverpool, indeed, stands in an intermediate position; for though it is not technically a depressed area, its rate of unemployment remains persistently high. But it is not, like the mining areas of South Wales and Durham or the weaving towns of Lancashire, a place in which the distress can be attributed mainly and directly to the shrinkage of a single industry's demand for labour.

The "Pilgrim" inquirers were very much concerned to discover, *inter alia*, how far the system of unemployment assistance could be legitimately charged with undermining the willingness to work. How far was it true, they asked, that a substantial fraction of "Means Test" cases were, or were becoming, cases of acclimatisation to perpetual unemployment, so that the offer of work would be evaded if possible, and the worker would be likely, even if work were found, to slip back into unemployment at the first opportunity? As pertinent to this, they also inquired how far it was true that an appreciable number of households were better off under the Means Test than when the head of the household was in the sort of work he would be likely to get.

That some families were better off unemployed than in work the investigation plainly showed. But the Pilgrim investigators are emphatic that it would be entirely wrong to deal with this problem by any reduction of the rates of relief; for the very households in which this condition exists are those in which primary poverty also exists. In all ordinary cases the U.A.B. keeps its grants well below what the recipient would earn if he were employed. Where it has departed from this rule it has done so only because adherence to it would involve serious malnutrition. The conclusion is unavoidable that in these cases the trouble is low wages, and not excessive relief.

There is a second, quite different, class of cases in which the investigators believe that men could get work of a sort, but fail to get it because they are standing out for what they regard as a tolerable wage—in the case of skilled men, for the standard Trade Union rate, or in other cases for a rate which is a psychological minimum in the worker's mind. In many of these instances the wage which the man might be able to get would actually leave him worse off than he is under the Means Test—at all events, if he has a family to support. But the "Pilgrim" investigators are confident that many of the long unemployed would sooner have work, even at a loss of income, if it were not for the fear of "blacklegging" or of sinking into a lower social grade from which they could never get back. Here again the root of the trouble lies in the low wages which prevail as soon as a man has to go outside the occupations covered by Trade Boards or effective Trade Union bargaining.

We saw, in considering the Beveridge Report, that in relatively few cases could the exceedingly low wages earned by insurable workers be attributed to evident physical or mental defects. Naturally there are, among the long unemployed, more workers of definitely inferior quality, either mental or physical; and the longer they remain out the more serious their defects become. But, at any rate in the depressed areas, the majority of the long unemployed are, in the opinion of the "Pilgrim" investigators, fully capable of good work. They include, indeed, a high proportion of oldish men—partly because transference has removed a good many of the younger workers from these areas. But there is nothing wrong with most of these older men except a lack of adaptability to new types of work—and often not even that. There is, however, no doubt about the reluctance of most employers, save under extreme pressure, to give men over forty a chance of getting back into a job, when they have been out for any length of time. Merely from this cause, a large amount of skill and good ability is running to waste, among a body of workers who are the most eager of all to find work, and made most wretched by the thought that their day of service is over.

On the other hand, personal defects do bulk large among the "residual" unemployed in the less depressed areas, such as Deptford and Leicester, and in Liverpool. Liverpool especially comes out very badly indeed in the "Pilgrim" survey. It manufactures casuals, and even unemployables, at an appalling rate. Its numerous miscellaneous trades are for the most part scandalously underpaid; and it is deplorably common to discharge boys as soon as they reach an age to claim even the most meagre adult wage. Both in Liverpool and elsewhere, it is evident that this practice, which appears to be on the increase, is responsible for some of the most inexcusable harm. It throws young men out, and makes it difficult for them to find work, just at the age when they should be acquiring both skill, or at least a definite trade, and habits of regular industry. It flings them on the "dole" at this most impressionable period, and naturally many become either embittered or incorrigibly pauperised, or perhaps both. Here again the blame rests on low wages—on the conditions which allow employers to carry on with a succession of juvenile workers, thrusting each generation into the street in its turn in order to avoid the payment of a living wage.

We have touched in this article on only a few aspects of this exceedingly valuable report—valuable above all because it tells an essentially human story. If we had space, we could say much more about it—of the evil effects of the decline in

* *Men Without Work*. A Report made to the Pilgrim Trust. Cambridge University Press. 7*s*. 6*d*.

apprenticeship, of the plain evidence that under the Means Test the wife very often goes short of food and clothing in order to keep her children healthy and decent, of the work of the unemployed clubs and settlements which the report admirably surveys and evaluates. We have chosen rather to concentrate attention upon those points at which the conclusions of the "Pilgrim" investigators bear directly on the question of wages, and confirm and amplify the evidence of the Beveridge Report. For here too is an overwhelming body of testimony that the existing methods of helping the underdog are inadequate, and that among the most urgent needs is wage-legislation which will reach the great mass of less skilled labour that neither Trade Boards nor Trade Unions have so far been able appreciably to affect.

PRAISE OF INERTIA

AN astrologer in a Sunday paper foretold, concerning all who were born on the same day as myself, that during the present week a "sort of inertia" would "hamper our plans." I was not greatly disturbed by this, for never since I first went to school at the age of five have I known a week in which a sort of inertia did not hamper my plans. There were times when I planned to become a scholar, but as a rule a sort of inertia overtook me as soon as a book had lost the flush of novelty. Inertia prevented me from starting for school in time and kept me idling in the streets when I should have been at home at my studies. It was inertia, again, that hampered my plan to become a Rugby footballer. Even when I overcame it to the point of getting into a jersey for a practice game, a sort of inertia undid me on the field and, though I kept my eye on the ball, that was about as near as I ever got to it.

Occasionally, I confess, I have regretted this from a selfish point of view, for has not Blake said, unless I am misquoting him—my present inertia prevents me from verifying the quotation—"Energy is endless delight"? Endless delight, I tell myself, is something worth getting out of an armchair for. Everything greedy and egotistic in me urges me to struggle for it at all costs. As a moralist, however, I ask myself whether endless delight is the highest good at which a man can aim. May this energy of Blake's not be a gross form of self-indulgence practised at the expense of other people? At least 50 per cent. of the most energetic men who have ever lived have been nuisances, and it seems to me that I have no right to endless delight if its ultimate result is to make other people miserable. Epicureans may praise energy as they will, but there is a strong moral case to be made out for inertia. Most of the Ten Commandments begin with "Thou shalt not"—a call to inertia that has often been criticised by those who hold that virtue is essentially a positive affair. I have the greatest admiration for the positive virtues, but I think that the critics of the Ten Commandments fail to realise that at least the A.B.C. of virtue may be found in a series of negations. "Don't" is a very good word, and, in spite of some harm that it has done, its repeated use throughout the ages has undoubtedly made for the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

The energetic good man, I am ready to admit, is the best man in the world; but next to him is the moderately good man suffering from inertia. Third in order of merit comes the moderately bad man suffering from inertia, and at the bottom of the list comes the energetic bad man. It is the energetic bad man who is the cause of half the world's troubles. He himself may find endless delight in his energy, but at what a cost to the rest of us! If only the plans of the bad man could be hampered by a sort of inertia, the plans of the good man could be carried out in five years, and the rest of us could idle in peace in our gardens. So desirable is a spread of inertia that, in my opinion, it would pay the world a thousand times over to give about twenty living leaders of men an annual income of a million pounds each on the sole condition that they never did a stroke of work but retired to splendid country estates where they would never get up before noon and would spend the rest of the day teaching their dogs to beg for lumps of sugar.

It seems to me that, if a man has to have a licence in order to drive a motor car, he ought also to have a licence before he is allowed to become energetic in public life; for energy in public life is far more dangerous to life and limb than driving a motor car. Hence I think it would be a good thing to have official committees of psycho-analysts who would examine all young men and women in their later teens for signs of incipient energy, and who, on discovering symptoms of an energy that might become dangerous in any of the examinees, would forbid them to enter politics and confine them to a life of inertia. To each of them the State should pay a pension that would provide not only the necessaries but some of the luxuries of existence. The pensioners would be allowed plenty of hunting, shooting and fishing, if they cared for these things, would be able to lunch and dine in West End restaurants, to spend the winter ski-ing or on the Riviera, to read all the latest novels and see all the latest films. In other words, they would be able to live like the idle rich. "Idle rich"—strange that the phrase should ever have been used as a term of reproach. So long as the rich are idle, they seem to me to do comparatively little harm. It is only when they are as busy as bees that they become a menace to society. Sir Basil Zaharoff enjoying his luxuries may not have been a particularly noble character, but it was not till he became active and energetic that he revealed himself as a public danger.

The truth is, the most energetic thing in the world is a bomb, and energetic men in public life are as potentially dangerous as bombs. The best statesmen, such as Pericles and Lincoln, have usually a saving strain of lethargy. Nature herself is lethargic, bringing the oak slowly to its full growth. And she is most lethargic of all, it seems to me, in regard to her finest products. What inertia she shows in the gradual growth of a man! I do not know whether any other animal grows so slowly as a man, and in this week of inertia I am not disposed to consult the encyclopaedia on the subject, but I do know that the horse, the cow, the dog, the cat, the goose, the turkey, the duck and the hen all arrive at maturity much more rapidly than the human being. When Nature ceases to be lethargic altogether and becomes furiously energetic, she produces flies and things of that kind. "Go slow" is her precept to all the best of her creations. "Ill weeds," she says, "being energetic, grow apace." With Nature herself calling on us to cultivate inertia, would it not be folly to disobey? It was she, and not the Webbs, who first taught the inevitability of gradualness—that golden summary of all the virtues of energy tempered with inertia.

Nature, I am afraid it must be admitted, has herself been guilty of a serious lapse into energy during the present spring. The shallow-minded have been loud in their praises of the sunniest of all Marches, rejoicing in the wild activities of trees attempting to blossom before their time. The wiser countryman, however, watched the daily labours of the sun with more sceptical eyes. In every parish in England he said, as he saw the fruit-trees opening their blossoms under the incitement of the sun: "We shall have to pay for this later," or "We have the blackthorn winter to get through yet." For the countryman knows that, if Nature becomes too active in March, she is endangering the fruits of all those blossoms that for the moment look so lovely. I do not like to seem ungrateful for a long spell of fine weather, but, I confess, if I could have stayed the broad beans from coming into flower last Sunday with a word, I should have spoken the word. To see the lilac threatening to break into blossom at the end of March seemed to me unnatural. In March I am in favour of rain except at week-ends, and of frosts that tell the blossoms in effect not to be in a suicidal hurry. It may be, of course, that the later months of the year will confound the forebodings of the sceptical countryman, but I am inclined to agree with the countryman in his dislike of

seeing Nature playing the busybody so early in the year. Possibly, however, my opinions are coloured by the inertia which the astrologer so rightly foresaw would overcome me this week; and I may be merely trying to excuse myself by accusing others of a vice to which I have no inclination. At the same time I think inertia can be defended, and even recommended, on all sorts of grounds, moral, hygienic and economic. On the moral grounds I have touched already. As regards health, it is only necessary to point out that the inert man never suffers from athlete's heart, tennis elbow, or those breakages of limbs that are the too frequent concomitants of winter sports. The economic case for inertia is even stronger. Take a naturally extravagant person like myself—a lover of music, the ballet and the theatre. If I were an energetic man, there is scarcely an evening in the week on which I should not be hurrying into town in a taxi to buy an expensive seat in some theatre or in some hall where a famous musician is performing. There are plays that I long to see and that, week after week, I promise myself I shall see; but, when I arrive home from work, the mood of inertia sets in, the armchair looks extraordinarily inviting, and the energy needed for going to a theatre oozes from my veins. As a result of this I reckon that I save a large sum of money every year—about enough to pay my Income Tax and so help the good causes of education, rearmament and—what I am told is the object of rearmament—disarmament. Compared with me, the energetic man is a wastrel, never happy unless he is spending his time and money at a race-meeting or in a night-club or some other pleasure resort. Endless delight—yes, I miss that; but one has to choose between being virtuous and being happy. Would that most of the energetic people in the world saw things in the same light! If they did, one of the immediate results would be a rush on the part of the dictators to buy hammocks where they could loll, exquisitely harmless figures, during the coming months—the world forgetting, by the world forgot—smoking cigarettes and watching the goldfinches flitting from the pear trees in the garden to the pollard willows round the pond. Y. Y.

THE COCOA STRIKE

THE chocolate that we shall presently eat might well have a bitter taste, for there is much bitterness just now over the cocoa beans from which it should be made. It may even happen that there will be a shortage and consequent increase in price.

More than half the world's supply of cocoa comes from the Gold Coast, in West Africa. Another quarter comes from Nigeria, the neighbouring British colony. It is not grown in large plantations owned by white men, but in thousands of small farms owned and managed by the native farmers and their wives. You can see them wherever you go—mere clearances in the bush. It is the women who mostly harvest the crop and dry the beans in the sun. Towards the end of each year you see the heaps of brown-red beans outside the mud huts and smell the strong sickly smell of them.

Up to the present the white cocoa merchants have competed with one another in buying the cocoa. Their representatives come out at the beginning of each season and employ native middlemen to go out into the villages and bargain for the crops. These brokers either buy direct from the farmers or from the farmers' own co-operative societies, where these exist. The average local price of cocoa has naturally varied with the number of competing buyers and the extent of the crop. Before the great world depression it was nearly £50 per ton, but in the years that followed it dropped badly; at first down to something over £30 and finally to £15 and less. In the season 1936–1937, however, things looked up again for the farmers. In that season the local price was between £35 and £40. There was a feeling of renewed prosperity on "the Coast." More money in the farmers' pockets meant more money to spend on European goods and school fees.

But when the merchants' representatives came back to collect the 1937–1938 crop, something had happened outside Africa. The merchants had come together and formed a pool for buying purposes. In short, they had abolished competition among themselves and were one and all offering less than £20 per ton for the new season's cocoa.

The shock to the farmer was terrific. At the end of October, when the information had first percolated, a meeting was called at Suhum in the Gold Coast. Over ten thousand farmers and their friends attended. The proceedings opened with a prayer in the manner in which the white man had taught the African to pray. After strong expressions of feeling two resolutions were passed—one that the Governor should be approached, "for the Government is our trustee," and the second in the following words: "We and all farmers in various states in the Gold Coast and Ashanti hereby adopt sound economic principles to prepare and store our present (1937–8) crop in proper places. And a committee be hereby appointed to consider all economic factors for its scientific marketing."

So the cocoa was to be stored and not sold and the great cocoa strike began. For four months it has been the chief topic of conversation in that part of the world which used to be known as the white man's grave.

In November, the Governor of the Gold Coast summoned the farmers and merchants to a conference in the Legislative Council Chamber at Accra. The merchants' spokesman deplored the strike and thought that the farmers might have consulted them before taking such drastic action. To this the farmers replied that they felt that the merchants might have consulted the farmers before forming the pool. They asked to have the details of the pool made clear. The merchants disliked the word "pool" and said that it was merely a private agreement among themselves that would really be in the farmers' interest as it aimed at removing certain abuses that had arisen from the employment of the African middleman. They said that the price of cocoa this season was not determined by this agreement, but by the uncertain condition of the world and by general rearmament. They hinted that if the Gold Coast farmers held up their crop other colonies might step in and reap the advantage. On the Ivory Coast, they said, the farmers were "selling merrily." The native chiefs who were the spokesmen of the farmers found it difficult to accept this. They had been told by the merchants time and again that competition would always safeguard the price of cocoa. Now competition had gone and the price of cocoa had fallen precipitately. They pinned their faith to the Government.

The Governor closed the conference by saying that it was difficult to judge which side was right and advising the farmers to compromise by selling to the pool at the stated price for this season—as an experiment.

The farmers went away despondent. A boycott of European goods began. The Chief Commissioner of Ashanti called a meeting to make it clear that the native chiefs' injunctions about this had no legal standing. To this the people replied that they could not buy European goods if they had no money. Many farmers announced that they would give up cocoa and go in for poultry or pigs or go and dig for gold.

One day while all this was happening I was walking through some experimental cocoa plots with an agricultural officer in Nigeria. He was explaining to me that after about 25 years a farmer finds that his trees are failing and he has to seek new land and start again. The Government agricultural service is trying to find out the reason for this degeneracy. It is possibly a case of providing the trees with sufficient shade, or it may be a question of the soil. It was clear that the solution of the problem would be of the greatest benefit to native farmers.

I had already been deeply impressed by the efforts of the agricultural departments in trying to make farming a prosperous and distinguished occupation for the West Coast African—who is, after all, more often born to farming than to anything else. But now that the most important crop is faced with disaster there will inevitably be a falling off of revenue. This,

if it goes on, will inevitably mean a curtailment of agricultural and other services. The chief power behind the pool is a huge combine that buys and sells among the Africans all over the West Coast. It has fixed the price of the European goods that the African wants to buy, and now it is beginning to fix the price of the things that the African has to sell. I begin to understand why no one in West Africa has a good word to say for this trading company.

It has been said that the farmers of West Africa would never stand together, but this has been disproved by what has happened. So thorough was the hold-up that my homeward-bound boat, scheduled to spend a whole day at Accra taking on a cargo of cocoa, found only a few canoe-loads awaiting it and we were off again in an hour or two. Now I learn that the farmers are burning their cocoa, making vast bonfires in full view of the premises of the white traders. Government advice is against this, but the farmers consider such advice as "unfortunate." They have heard that a shortage always means higher prices. They therefore propose to create a shortage. The boycott of European goods continues. Import duties in the Gold Coast were £137,000 in January, 1938, as compared with £251,000 in January, 1937.

The strike has now spread, a little late in the season, to Nigeria. In the meantime a Commission of Inquiry has been sent out by the Colonial Office. The African, still pinning his faith to British Government, is hopeful that it will justify the farmers' action.

KATHLEEN GIBBERD

PLEBISCITIS

Now Austria swarms to the polls
To acclaim her enforced abolition
The plebiscite wave as it rolls
Wipes out every Treaty partition.
Prague sinks itself into the Reich
By ballot of Slovak and Czecho;
For *Anschluss* exchanging *Ausgleich*
Hungarians *heil* to the echo.

With one irresistible urge
Rumanians offer Rumania;
The Letts all elect to submerge
That the Poles may engorge Lithuania;
Rome boasts a one hundred per cent.
Referendum of live Abyssinians;
China rubs itself out with intent
To expand the Mikado's dominions.

And England, whose battles were won
Of old on the *Sportplatz* Etonian,
Who for freedom fights gallantly on,
Holding out to the last Catalonian,
Now votes plebiscites for the enslaved,
To avoid international friction,
That countries too weak to be saved
May consent to their own crucifixion.

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

A POSITIVE PEACE PROGRAMME

SIR,—In response to the letter signed "A Socialist," I certainly do not accept "the Government's view that the single-handed defence of the whole Empire against all comers is an absolute duty, quite apart from circumstances or foreign policy." Let me quote as the text for this letter another verse from the poem which furnished the text for my article:

Then went I to a garden, and did spy
A gallant flower,
The crown Imperiall: Sure, said I,
Peace at the root must dwell.
But when I digg'd, I saw a worm devoure
What show'd so well.

Civilisation and liberty are a fairer cause than the integrity of our possessions. But to-day it is these, and not the Empire, which are in immediate danger Because the Prime Minister does not register strong emotions about them, he tends unfortunately to gather support from the many people in this country who, rightly perhaps, prefer peace to any cause whatever. That he registers strong emotions about the Empire is overlooked, at present, by these supporters. And when danger in that direction does arise, the issues will probably be so inextricably tangled that those who love civilisation and liberty will not find it easy to stand aside. So we look like enjoying the worst of both worlds. Meanwhile protests are in vain. "The immediate job," in Mr. Kingsley Martin's words, "is to overcome the Party particularism which stands in the way of a union of popular forces."

J. M. KEYNES

WHAT OUGHT WE TO DO?

SIR,—"Live Dog" exaggerates A soldier does not go to "almost certain" death. About one in ten was killed in the last war, though the death-rate of the "tyrant" officer class was, of course, higher. Taking one kind of freedom with another—including the freedom to write a "Live Dog" letter—the modern Englishman and Englishwoman are probably more free than in any other large community that ever existed

Hitler and Mussolini are not British nonconformists, nor are they old Etonians either. They are far on the way to being as divine as Roman Emperors, and when pacifist Britain is governed by their proconsul or Fascist nominee he will not react to "non-violent non-co-operation" as we did to Gandhi. "Live Dog," unless he is a moral coward, which presumably he isn't, will then live no longer. Drake may have been a "pirate," but Queen Elizabeth lived some time ago, and had not signed the Kellogg Pact nor the League Covenant.

The British Empire, built by violence in violent times, has lasted on mainly owing to the inherent decency and sense of the British people (you are often rather hard up for filling the "This England" column) and I have enough confidence in that decency to be willing to live cheerfully under any form of government they may freely evolve, even Communism and beastly bureaucracy.

Reading "Live Dog" I feel a sudden sympathy for Col. Blimp, who did not always live in a Turkish bath, and, in his youth, risked his life for a country which his more intelligent relatives, goaded by conscience, as well as by popular pressure, have made an increasingly decent place for the average man, and by degrees, and relatively, for even the Under Dog.

Unless, at long last, we of the Left unite, we shall be governed by a Mosley or a Bruno Britannicus—such of us as may choose to go on living; for in that day perhaps even Mr. Lane will be found singing "Rule Britannia" to his firing squad.

Blissford Pool, Fordingbridge. A H SCOTT

SIR,—I shall be very grateful if you will allow me the hospitality of your columns in order to draw your readers' attention to the Manifesto that has been issued by the Peace Pledge Union.

This appeal to the general public is frankly made to all who are concerned with the maintenance of peace and democracy and who realise that they are inseparable. It points to the Great War for evidence that the attempt to crush Fascism by the exercise of military power is an attempt to repeat "the war to end war" which has led to the pitiful and desperate world of to-day. It states that Fascism flourishes because of the belief that, in the world as it is, violence is the only means by which the injustices under which nations suffer can be redressed It says that the fence of arms which the democratic nations are erecting against Fascism appears only as a challenge to the Fascist nations, and points out that in order to contend with Fascism by arms a democracy must become totalitarian in its regimentation.

The Manifesto appeals for a new foreign policy based upon economic appeasement and reconciliation. The policy described as "Collective Security" has proved itself to be both wrong and impracticable because it cannot exist without those military alliances which in the past have been among the most fruitful causes of war. It claims that the essence of real collective security lies in the formation of a new order among the nations in which the economic needs of the people of the world should form the basis of international justice, rather than the maintenance of the national *status quo* and the retention by victors in war of economic advantages maintained at the expense of the people of other countries.

The Manifesto commends the Van Zeeland Report to the

immediate attention of the Governments which initiated it. It urges the necessity of a new peace treaty before another war begins and commends the pacifist policy of constructive peace making to all on the grounds justified alike by reason and conscience.

Pacifists have too long been accused of being merely negative. This Manifesto is our reply to the charge. Our resistance to every form of tyranny is no less resolute than that of those who put their ultimate trust in bombs and poison gas. We would convince them that there is actually and practically a more excellent way. We believe that Shelley spoke the simple truth when he said:

> Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom and Endurance,
> These are the seals of that most firm assurance
> Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength.

96 Regent Street, London, W.1. MAX PLOWMAN

SIR,—Although Mr. Joad would hotly contest the charge, I seem to detect underlying his article "On not fighting Fascism" a confusion of thought which happens to be particularly current. This confusion arises from a failure to distinguish between respect for international law on the one hand and, on the other, the particular attempt to secure it which is represented by the machinery of the League of Nations. Because of the apparent failure of that particular attempt, defeatists like Mr. Joad are now throwing up the sponge everywhere as if nothing else can be done to save respect for international law.

The answer is, I submit, (1) that the League of Nations machinery has never been applied; (2) even if it can be proved that it has been applied and failed, that does not make civilisation bankrupt; other methods are still open.

As to (1) if, as I think will be agreed, the culmination of League of Nations action was the attempt to impose sanctions on Italy, even Mr. Joad will refuse to admit that the attempt, at the time when, and in the absurd manner in which, it was applied was anything but foredoomed to failure. It is not fair to blame these fatal mistakes on the League of Nations machinery itself but rather on the leading nations who were members of it.

As to (2), if it be right to condemn the League of Nations machinery as a failure on account of the faults of its leading members, let us remember that if one particular method has failed, the object still commands our loyalty. Once we have made up our minds that the object itself is incapable of achievement, mankind has returned by the shortest of short cuts to the jungle from which it has for centuries been emerging.

The Dictators are well aware of this popular confusion of thought in democratic countries and are taking full advantage of it. Mr. Chamberlain and his followers have been outstanding victims. The main object—respect for international law—presupposes that a sharp distinction should be rigorously maintained between the nations that break the law and the nations which preserve it. Hitler and Mussolini know well that the failure to maintain that distinction spells the doom of international law and the final triumph of Fascism. Therefore they can gloat with satisfaction at every new hobnobbing or combination between the representatives of the law-abiding nations on the one hand and the law-breaking nations on the other, whether the combination be that of Halifax and Von Ribbentrop or that of Perth and Ciano or any other combination.

The present Government and Mr. Joad have alike strayed from first principles. The distinction between law breaking and law preserving being fundamental, we have to pursue it to its logical conclusion and shape our conduct accordingly. This implies (*a*) that we shall refuse to associate in our social and business relations with the law breaker and law preserver on equal terms; (*b*) that we shall never abandon the search for methods of preventing, and, if possible, punishing the law breakers. If I live next door to a burglar, I may not be able to stop his professional activities, but I do not send him in my card. And if I have made up my mind that the local police are unable or unwilling to deal with him I seek out other means of self-protection. But (*a*) is no less essential than (*b*), and if we transgress the former rule, we cannot hope to achieve the latter.

If we have made up our minds that the League of Nations is incapable of effecting the main object, let us simply efface the League from our minds and bring ourselves back to the point whence we all started. But if we take the advice of those who cannot or will not distinguish means from ends, the world of 1938 will, instead of being a quarter of a century in advance of 1914, prove to be centuries behind. H. SAMUELS

11 King's Bench Walk, Temple, E.C.

THE SUDETENDEUTSCHE

SIR,—Mr. Keynes regards a settlement of the German question in Czechoslovakia as an essential preliminary to a new European Pact. This emphasis of the importance of Czech policy has been one of the most striking confusions in recent discussions of the situation in Central Europe; originating apparently in the *Times* articles of a few months ago, it has spread to sections of the Left, which fail to see that by exaggerating the responsibilities of the Czech Government, they provide exactly the pretext which Hitler wants for his next intervention.

To suggest that the Czechs have it in their power to remedy the present situation is absurd, because the measures which the Czech Government can introduce to deal with the German problem are so insignificant in relation to the forces which they are designed to counteract. How can anyone seriously suppose that an improvement in the political situation of the Germans in Czechoslovakia will hinder the course of German expansion in Central and Eastern Europe? It does not lie within the power of the Czechs to arrest this development, because they cannot make any fundamental change in the position of the Germans without annihilating the Republic. To cede the German populated territories, or to give them autonomy is impossible, for geographical and economic reasons. The purely German regions are not a compact bloc, but a band of territory which runs round three sides of the square province of Bohemia; next to these purely German areas there are large regions with mixed populations where no racial frontier could be drawn. These are the densely settled urban regions of North and East Bohemia where the heavy industries and the bulk of the export trades are situated. To divide them would mean the economic ruin of these regions, already hard hit by the depression.

Not much can be done to improve the position of the Germans, because from the political standpoint their position has never been bad. The provisions of the Treaty of St. Germain have been kept and the German minority has never based its criticisms of Czech policy on an infringement of these fundamental principles. For a time after the war the German minorities did not co-operate with the Government, but in 1926, on the initiative of the Agrarian Party, a period of active co-operation began between the Czech and German Agrarians and Clerical Parties. Later in 1929 the Social Democrats joined the Cabinet.

After the rise of the Sudetendeutsche Party, which in 1935 took two-thirds of the German vote, the German members of the activist parties remained in the Government, and the Czech parties, impressed by the need for conciliation, made efforts to remove the one serious grievance, the low proportion of Germans in the civil service, by the agreement of February 18th, 1937. This agreement provided that the proportion of posts held by Germans should be gradually raised to their proportion of the total population of the country; it also made provision for the allotment of Government expenditure on public works in the depressed industrial regions.

It is this agreement which has been the main object of attack by the Henlein Party, because the pace has been slower than was expected; the percentage of Germans has been reached already in the Ministry of Education, but in the other ministries the percentage is something between 10 and 17 per cent. Technically there has not been any breach of the agreement, since the Germanisation of the services was not intended to be achieved immediately, but it is true that the pace could be somewhat faster than it has been, and the Sudetendeutsche Party is able to make some capital out of this fact. The German activist parties, on the other hand, have admitted that the agreement has given posts to large numbers of Germans and has brought about an improvement in employment in the depressed areas.

The withdrawal of the activist parties marks an end of this long period in which the Germans have taken equal responsibility with the Czechs in the Government. The reason for their withdrawal has been, of course, the successful occupation of Austria and not, as the Henlein party allege, a failure on the part of the Government to keep this agreement.

Looking at the development up to the present time, it is apparent that the Germans have got all that they can expect within the framework of democratic institutions. The difficulty is that their real demands are not concerned at all with these details of administration, or indeed with any material improvement in their position. No one who was present at Herr Henlein's meetings in London could fail to notice the absence of specific charges against the Czechs or specific demands from them. Taken at its face value, his policy seemed vague and platitudinous to the point of

stupidity; but his reference to democratic institutions made it clear that the vagueness was intentional, and that his aims are really psychological and emotional aspirations which perhaps can never be satisfied by normal political activities.

To deal with these intangibles by practical measures in the present atmosphere of distrust seems a hopeless task, but the Czechs have taken the only way open to them and are proposing legislation which could serve as a basis of negotiations. The chief of these new measures is designed to meet the German demand for self-government. Autonomy in the sense of cantonal government is out of the question, but greater control over the local government can be given. The Government's new measure is designed to give greater independence to local government bodies. The councils are to have greater powers in appointing their officials and officials are to be appointed on the basis of nationality in proportion to the population of their districts.

Will it be possible to reach a settlement on these lines? Measures of this kind will remove any pretext for intervention from Germany, but so long as the present atmosphere of successful power politics prevails it will be extremely easy for the Nazis to provoke incidents in any of the frontier towns. Unless the minority settlement in Czechoslovakia is supplemented by an agreement between Prague and Berlin it will not solve the problem. But a bilateral treaty between Germany and Czechoslovakia holds for the Czechs exactly the same prospects as Berchtesgaden.

Hence the question of how the Czech-German settlement can be related to a European Pact is a vital one. If, as Mr. Keynes suggests, a Czech-German agreement is to be a preliminary to a general settlement, then a general settlement can never be made. To wait for the European Pact till the position of the Germans in Czechoslovakia is cleared up is to wait till the next *fait accompli* has cleared Czechoslovakia out of the way. The disintegration of the Republic would mean German domination of Eastern Europe and once that is achieved, there will be no general settlement.

If, however, the Czechs can obtain an agreement with Berlin as part of a general settlement then a solution could be reached.

Of course, it will be pointed out that whatever the Czechs do the Germans in Bohemia will not be equal partners in the government since they could not support a policy of alliance with France and Russia. But this dilemma arises because League membership now means an alliance with an anti-German bloc. If the League had worked, none of these small states ought to be in a position to have a foreign policy at all.

There can be no reason for regarding this minority question as a special case. One of the main objects of a European Pact must be to secure better treatment of minorities in the whole region, and to remove the underlying cause of racial friction by measures to assist the economic recovery of Eastern Europe as a whole.

Prague. DOREEN WARRINER

"TO BEG I AM ASHAMED"

SIR,—We regret that by withholding publication of *To Beg I Am Ashamed*, by Sheila Cousins, we may seem to many of your readers and to other members of the public, to have refused to fight for a principle worth fighting for. May we therefore take this opportunity of placing before your readers the exact position in which we found ourselves on Saturday morning last, April 2nd?

On the evening of Friday, April 1st, we were visited by an inspector and a sergeant of the City Police for the second time that day, and they, acting on instructions from a high official authority, informed us that unless *To Beg I Am Ashamed* was withheld from publication "serious consequences might follow." We had before us also the views of our legal advisors, who stated that there was nothing indecent in the book and nothing that contravened the law; but our legal advisors could not maintain, in view of previous cases of the kind, that should we proceed with publication and be prosecuted, their view of the book would be upheld in the magistrate's court in the City of London where the case would be tried.

We were also aware that a certain section of the press, by a gross breach of privilege as between publishers and press, had given to this book, before publication, a notoriety that it never deserved, and had attracted to it a public for which it was never intended; and this factor was bound to weigh heavily with us in coming to our final decision as to whether to proceed with publication or withhold from publication.

It seemed to us, therefore, that we had been driven into a hopeless position; on the one hand, should we proceed with publication, we should indeed be fighting for a principle worth fighting for, but should be supplying a public, manufactured by a section of the press, with a book never intended for it. On the other hand, should we withhold publication, we should deprive that public of the book, but be refusing the opportunity to fight for a principle which we hold dear.

We decided to withhold the book.

We still maintain, as we have always maintained, and a large number of public men and women and literary critics who have read the book, as well as our legal advisors, concur in our opinion, that there is nothing salacious or indecent in the book. It is a genuine and authentic record written in our opinion with dignity and reticence, untainted by that objectionable mixture of suggestiveness and sentimentality that might so easily have characterised a work of this kind. Essentially decent itself, it had, however, after a week of publicising by a section of the press, become something of a quite different character. And that, we think, is perhaps the most grave result of what has happened in the press during the last week. We hope that the precedent of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* will not be followed. If it is, there is an end to all free expression of thought.

Broadway House, GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LTD.
68–74 Carter Lane, E.C.4.

A.R.P.

SIR,—Anyone with the least knowledge of what has been happening in Spain must be growing more and more distressed by the complete lack of reality in our air raid precautions. We seem to have learnt nothing from the experience of Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona, yet the attacks which may be expected upon our great cities will be made, if they are made, by just the same people and the same machines as have been bombing these Spanish towns. May I suggest a few general observations, the fruit of some months' experience?

1. The attacks are likely to be chiefly with high explosives and with incendiary bombs. Poison gas is a tricky thing to use effectively, and neither Germans nor Italians have tried it out under conditions such as they would have to face in England. In Abyssinia the Italians were alone in the air and their opponents had nothing worth talking about in the way of anti-aircraft guns.

2. The raids will be aimed at large areas of working-class buildings. Our drawing-room Fascists, our Oswald Mosleys and

Arnold Wilsons, like to pretend that the bombing of Spanish cities has been against military objectives. To those who have been in the cities during attacks this seems merely comic. If there is any counter-attack the bombers unload over the most densely inhabited parts, and then hurry off, as they are vulnerable to the fighting plane. Over England the bombers would be exposed to far more effective attacks than over Government Spain, and would be even more in a hurry.

Large working-class areas are the natural objective, because the Fascist mentality, especially that of the type who usually fly the bombers, is anti-working class. The enemy will expect to find some friends amongst the English upper classes. Rows of brick houses are also a good objective, because Spanish experience shows that slums and jerry-built areas almost shake down under a heavy bombardment, so that a large area can be laid waste, and possibly set on fire, whereas the bombing of the modern steel-frame building is an unremunerative occupation.

3. The effect of the bombing will therefore be to leave a large homeless, unnerved, and angry population. As things are at present they will not have any idea what to do or where to go. The firemen, ambulances, and sanitary workers will want to get them out of the devastated area while they put out fires, and try to dig out bodies, etc. In London this population might easily amount to 200,000 after the first raid. I have still to meet any possible victim who knew what he ought to do with himself and the remainder of his family. His natural inclination will be to go and break somebody's head in the more residential and official part of his city. This is natural, and might be mildly beneficial in a few cases, but is not really the way to deal with the situation. The East-end of London, and the poorer parts of many cities contain people far more highly strung than most poor Spaniards, who are a race almost without nerves, and quite impervious to noise.

4. Unless internal disorder is to follow raids in most cities we must remember that the homeless population needs humouring, guiding, feeding, and treating for a number of minor casualties with which the overworked hospitals will not be able to deal. The first necessity is, therefore, a number of clearing-houses, each of them capable of dealing with several thousands. These should be chosen at once, the floor space measured out, and certain supplies made ready. I have had a good deal to do with the largest Madrid clearing-house, a former convent in the west of the city. It was handling about 5,000 refugees a night, evacuating them as soon as it could. It was well run, but suffered from a complete lack of certain foodstuffs, so that the mortality was pretty high. Each clearing-house must have some medical staff and nurses. They will have to cater for a very high proportion of aged and infirm people, of young children, of nursing and expectant mothers. At least one or two of the staff must have had experience of midwifery, as a number of babies will be born prematurely.

There is a very large amount of unused floor space in London, but it should be marked out NOW, and examination made as to the cooking and other conveniences available. A large reserve of mattresses is essential, and should be packed and ready, for there will be little transport available, and the roads may be badly blocked. If you don't get your refugees "bedded down" for the night, they will be out on the street.

5. Arrangements must be made for the regular and speedy evacuation of your city clearing-houses. It is no good sending people out haphazard into country towns, etc. Most of these could take large numbers of refugees, but only if they have made their arrangements beforehand. Instead of worrying villages about gas-drill, etc., we should be having billeting officers round deciding how many refugees each area can take, and from which of the larger cities they are to come. In Spain this was comparatively easy, but in England with its dense industrial population it would be a very complicated problem, and everything will be chaotic if it is left to the last minute.

The evacuation of children from dangerous but still unbombed areas is a similar problem. When children are sent without their parents, as must often happen, the best unit is about twenty-five, and should go always with a woman teacher, who will be responsible for keeping the records, etc., of each child.

If this kind of organisation is done at all thoroughly it will mean a considerable amount of interference with household property, and in London the natural clearing-houses will be the large modern blocks of flats and offices. Clearing-houses should normally be steel built, and it is essential that they should have staffs used to dealing with human beings *en masse*. People should be taught which clearing-house to make for first, but some sending of refugees from one to another is inevitable. It is not going to be a pleasant time for those in authority, but if they want to save themselves they will begin making preparations for the homeless refugees at once, otherwise they will find themselves at the mercy of an infuriated crowd within a few hours of the raid, and they will have to cope with something approaching a civil war.

Authors' Club, G. T. GARRATT
2 Whitehall Court, S.W.1.

HISTORY OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE

SIR,—I note in your article on Labour and War, of April 2nd, 1938, that you make a number of quotations from Vol. I, chapter VI, referring to the British Labour attitude during the late war in the *History of the Peace Conference*, which I edited. You refer to me as the author of the chapters in question. But this is an error. If you will look at Vol. VI, p. XXV, which gives a list of contributors, you will see this chapter is by Mr. C. Delisle Burns. It is rather important that this correction should be made, first because I should not like to deprive a distinguished contributor of the credit due to his article, and second because my contributors frequently expressed views with which I did not wholly agree. I do not deserve therefore to have any views in this History attributed to me, unless they are specifically mentioned as mine.

34 Lensfield Road, Cambridge. HAROLD TEMPERLEY

FRONTIER AT GRETNA

SIR,—Your critic Alastair, in reviewing my pamphlet, *Plan for Scotland*, issued by the London Scots Self-Government Committee, agrees with me that what is needed for the rehabilitation of Scotland and the curing of her appalling economic, social and vital ills is self-government with planned Socialist redevelopment of the country by a Scottish Socialist Government. So far, so good.

But, says Alastair, why postpone devolution till Labour is in power and able to grant it? My answer is, how else do you propose to get it? Through the Tories? Through the Liberals? Alastair agrees that the one is implacably hostile, the other incapable of granting it. Through a joint demand of all Scots M.P.s? But for Tory Scots M.P.s to join in asking for self-government for to-day's majority-Socialist Scotland would be simply to sign their own political death warrant. Through Alastair's Scottish National Party? But how will they get a Bill through Parliament without a single M.P. in the House? For ten years they have been standing for Parliament and none of their candidates has come within measurable distance of being elected. Recruited from ex-Tory, ex-Liberal, ex-Socialist Home Rulers, they cannot agree on any forthright economic-social programme and so go before the electorate of one of the most economically and socially distressed countries in Europe without any economic-social policy whatsoever. The result, non-election, is hardly surprising. The vast Labour-voting industrial worker majority of Scots voters are only interested in self-government as a short cut to Socialism in Our Time in Scotland and better living conditions such as Scots Socialists under self-government could give them, and will only vote overwhelmingly for it when placed before them as a programme for a Socialist self-governing Scotland. Equally, Scots Socialist M.P.s and leaders increasingly see in self-government in to-day's majority-Socialist conditions in Scotland their one big chance—probably the only chance they will have—of clearing up once and for all the Scottish human tragedy. My thesis remains. Only Labour stands to gain from self-government—only Labour will grant it.

Again, says Alastair, why not have a full blown tariff frontier at Gretna (instead of the bulk purchase State imports and exports board I propose as the necessary economic control-limit within which to plan)? Losh, Alastair man, when ye were raiding your Scottish Nationalist Brains Trust for choice titbits to make a Scots Self-government Bill really acceptable for the Labour Party (or any other party) to introduce at Westminster, what ailed ye to forget a separate Scottish Army and Navy, Scottish sailors in kilts on Scottish battleships, a coinage sprouting thistles and head of Bruce and Chairlie, and Princess Margaret Rose installed at Holyrood as Queen of Scots? Could any of these suggestions, daft as they are, be more calculated than yours of a tariff wall splitting England and Scotland into a rigid economic separation, to make a Government of Scotland Bill be not only laughed out but not even find a single proposer at Westminster?

Whereas the combined bulk purchase imports and exports board and foreign exchange control I propose is not, as you appear to indicate, the stillborn child of my own imagination but a

commonplace of Socialist thought, the lynchpin of all Socialist economy, the one economic safeguard (against the outside world and rich internal wreckers) of the Socialist State intent on its planning, for lack of which the British Labour Government of 1931 and Blum's Government of 1937 both fell. THOMAS BURNS

56 Sloane Street, S.W.1.

Miscellany

COUNTRY NOTES

The Urchin Wakes

THE moment is near at hand when one no longer wishes merely to "stand and stare," but also to look about for things not obviously revealed. Not only are the birds thinking about their nests, but the hibernating animals are beginning to emerge. The squirrels (which, indeed, are not true hibernators) have been active for some weeks past, and the evening is not far distant when your dog will grow frantic as he discovers a hedgehog shuffling along under a hedge. You can collect the hedgehog if you like, and make a pet of him with bribes of bread-and-milk, but if you have no taste or time for such school-boyish occupations there is still some amusement to be derived from the study of any stray earth-pig you may meet in the course of a walk. For one thing you may consider respectfully that in this queer prickly object, probably very untidy at this time of year, since leaves and bits of moss from his winter home still remain impaled upon his prickles, like some grotesque Ophelia, you have the representative of one of the oldest inhabitants of Britain. The earth-pig was here before man was; he is extremely ancient, and truly indigenous. In fact, he has probably not changed his appearance at all since long before a caricature of man first shambled round on Piltdown. This alone confers on him a dignity which is not shared even by the badger, our little British bear, and certainly not by the rabbit, that upstart foreigner who claims, with more justification than most of our aristocracy, to have arrived on these shores with William the Conqueror. But there are other reasons which may endear the hedgehog to his compatriots. Watch him as he hunts for food, so busy and thorough: he wins the admiration of all who dislike slip-shod methods. Or pick him up (remembering, however, that he is covered with fleas) and put him at the angle of two walls, so that he has no escape except by going over. Stoutly, he sets himself to climb. It is a dogged rather than a nimble performance. For every few inches gained, he makes a mistake and falls to the ground, rolling himself quickly into a ball as he tumbles, so that he may bounce on his prickles and take no harm. When he does eventually reach the top, he rolls himself off down the other side, though I suspect that this is due to accident rather than to design.

Hedgehogs eat snakes among other things; and although the bite of even an adder cannot harm him the wily pig does not see the fun of allowing himself to be bitten when he can dispatch his victim by the means nature has provided. So he merely gives a preliminary nip to provoke the snake (for unless he can bite just below the head he cannot hope to kill outright) and then rapidly rolls himself into a ball before the fangs can strike him. Hurt and enraged, the snake attacks, too angry to notice his own wounds, until the moment comes for the hedgehog to unroll and start a leisurely meal, from the tail upwards. I have never had the good fortune to see such a combat, but I live in hopes.

* * *

Eternities of Kitchen Garden

The conservatism of our island race seems to begin with our vegetables. Rows and rows of cabbages, rows and rows of sprouts. . . . The sameness of kitchen gardens appals the thoughtful epicure looking out of railway carriage windows. However ill-informed a gardener, his eye never lights upon a

Estate Duties

by instalments

IN THESE post-war years Estate Duty has become more productive to the Exchequer and more onerous to those who benefit under a Will.

The necessities of the national finances are such that there would appear little likelihood of this particular burden of taxation being lightened.

There is, however, a way of escape for those who wish to pass on, unimpaired, the savings of a life-time or inherited wealth.

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N.S. 9.4.38. 267

plant he cannot instantly identify. Is enterprise totally lacking, he may well ask, the sense of adventure entirely dead, among these cultivators of the homely plot? The answer is: They are.

Yet there is no reason why the amateur epicure should go unsatisfied. Variety can be his for a few pence and a little extra trouble; not many pence and not much trouble. He grows cabbages already, does he, in his own kitchen garden patch? Then why not grow the red cabbage as well as the green? There exists a theory in this country that red cabbage is meant for pickling and for pickling only, a theory demonstrably fallacious. He grows potatoes: then why not vary the floury English kinds with some handfuls of the French, which may be obtained under such charming names as Belle de Juillet, and which are of a far better and firmer consistency? He grows tomatoes, no doubt, but has he tried the Fruit tomato, something like a myrobolan plum to look at, red or yellow? Has he tried cooking the young shoots of the common hop, or of the poke-weed, both of which resemble asparagus? Has he tried eating his vegetable marrows when they are four or five inches long, instead of letting them grow into watery giants fit for nothing but the local flower-show? (The more he picks, the more they will crop.) Has he given up an odd corner to growing sorrel, that weed demanding no care, which may be picked as early as February and used either like spinach or as a soup? (*soupe à l'oseille*). Has he any globe artichokes, as handsome in grey-green leaf as they are useful as a vegetable?

All these are simple, but a step forward in ambition and the possession of a warm greenhouse wall will give him Indian corn on the cob, also the succulent egg-plant (aubergine) and even pimento if he cares for it.

This list is a short one and is really designed only to send the kitchen-gardener back to the catalogues where he will find further suggestions and also instructions. Our nurserymen, some of them, seem to be getting more enterprising, even if their customers have not yet followed their example. The most engaging suggestion which I have come across, however, hails from France. It is called "Innocent surprises for the salad," and by means of a few packets of seed enables you to grow fruits charmingly deceptive as caterpillars, snails, worms and hedgehogs.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

THE HONEYCOMB

THEY hummed: "We have built a city where
The walls are of crystal, the streets gold:
We have made pearl-windowed mansions there,
And ambered pools frost-cold."

In the municipal cells they piled
Honey from heather-bells,
Pollen-flavoured, mountain-wild,
Like dew drawn from wishing-wells.
White walls imprisoned the golden flame,
The herb-scented mystery;
Heatless fire in that wax frame
Dreaming like riches hidden in ambergris.

And then they droned: "It is over, finished, done;
Perfect in sweetness now each angled dome;
Soon, soon the deaf, marauding hordes will come
To swallow, offal-wise, our honeyed home."

M. R. DAVIES

JOURNEY TO SWEDEN

JUST recently I had to go to Sweden for the purpose of solemn sociological investigation. I have duly turned in my report, but I think I have left out of it what is most important in the daily life of the unintellectual Swede (of which there are a few), and that is—the Art of Getting a Drink in Sweden.

This art is one studied very ardently by the natives and visiting foreigners, as ardently as it was studied in New York ten years ago, and for the same reason. The game is played in a milder and more civilised manner than it was under prohibition, and the rules do allow the drinker to win sometimes, but it is essentially the same game.

The prizes are no better than they were in New York in the Dry age. The white, or pale yellow, liquid that Swedes drink before meals, and at most other times, is called snaps and takes the place of whisky or gin. I suspect it is made of wood-pulp, it tastes as if artificial silk stockings had been soaked in it, and though there are various names on the bottles it is all made by one State-controlled corporation. The only way to make it tolerable is to chase it immediately by a beer. But here the Government catches you out. You cannot get beer at all in Sweden. Class II beer, which they will sell you without shame, is actually what Americans called near-beer.

Wine you can in theory buy, but you don't. It is just as foolish as asking for wine in an American saloon or an English pub. You'll get something, all right.

Now, for the rules of getting one of these drinks, such as they are. Firstly, for foreigners.

The game is rather like Snakes and Ladders. You think you are near home and you are suddenly sent right back to base. There *are* short cuts, but you are not likely to find them. Some highly experienced people have taken their passports to the Central Spirit Bureau and got a sort of temporary ticket, but that is neither usual nor easy. The ordinary man has to obey the rule that he cannot have a drink without eating a meal, and a Swedish meal at that. Then he may have a thimbleful of snaps; if he wants more, he must have a half thimbleful, and then no more. If he waits till three o'clock he can have another. After six o'clock, he can have another still.

But the effective method is to know a man, preferably a hotel porter or a similar official. That brings you at once within the second class, that of Natives Seeking a Drink.

A native may lawfully buy a drink, to drink himself or offer a friend (there are no saloons or pubs in Sweden, only restaurants) only if he has a drink book. A drink book is a book which entitles him to buy the amount of drink named on it in the time mentioned. Never does the amount exceed four litres a month.

The way of getting a drink book is this: you apply and answer a number of questions, as to your citizenship, status, if married, if a parent, and so on, ending up with the amount of drink you want. The official then questions you, particularly asking why you want to be allowed to drink. If the answers are satisfactory, he allots you so much drink.

At certain intervals, the drink book has to be renewed. If you have misbehaved—as, for example, if you have not paid your rates—it is taken away from you. I forgot to ask if you are also made to stand in the corner.

Herr Gösta Klemming, of the Telegraph Company, and a business man with the kindest heart that I have ever found in a business man, explained to me that herein lay the virtues of the system, and the reason why (it was hoped) it would shortly be imitated by all other countries. "It enables a continuous control to be kept upon the most suspicious classes in the community—those who desire to drink," he said.

Not all drinking, you may imagine, is done according to drink book rules. Newspapermen, of course, have the matter most efficiently and easily organised. Special allowances are made by officialdom for birthdays, celebrations, and entertainments. At regular intervals, therefore, entertainments are entered up by the newspaper and the drink collected. "We just have a foreign delegation to entertain once a month," explained the city editor of one daily to me. "It always consists of between 17 and 23 persons. Everything is quite simple." Other persons know a hotel porter or a head waiter. The drink sold in any hotel has to correspond to the meals served. But there are a good number of teetotalers who don't take a drink at all. You understand. Even more people have abstemious friends whom they persuade to take out a drink book and let them drink on it.

But the friendless, the unhappy man who is just a man who wants a drink? He pitches down to low levels which even New Yorkers have forgotten. The shops at Vaxholm were full of non-alcoholic liqueurs into which you were to pour raw alcohol, presumably home made. "BENEDICTREUSE. Monk-type Liqueur. Alcohol-free," was a label which promised the worst.

But the saddest of all signs in the shop windows was a series of flat cakes, wrapped in cellophane, and surrounded by test tubes, corks, and jars. The cakes were labelled *Chateau Larose*, and so on. "Make twenty litres of gorgeous claret from Rhubarb," said the notices. You took so much sugar and so much rhubarb—or so much apple, pumpkin, mangold wurzel, or pear (or you could even use grapes, though it was not recommended)—added to it some water, this cake and some powders. Twenty litres of the loveliest Bordeaux would result. A different cake and different powders would give Liebfraumilch. Bottles were provided, and even the labels. I copied one out; it was in English, more or less:

Angus Georg Wilson

FINEST PORTWINE

Vintage 1848

O P O R T O

RAYMOND POSTGATE

BEECHAM AND TERTIS

I AM aware that the word "patriot" stinks in the nostrils of many people to-day, just as any other word may if it is abused, but nevertheless it is, like other words, capable of bearing a meaning, and when I say of Mr. Lionel Tertis that he is a patriotic English musician I mean that he is truly and disinterestedly concerned in improving the quality of our musical life in this country. There is a virtue and a vice of nationalism. The virtue is in a healthy and friendly rivalry in which each country strives to emulate and surpass the merits of the other; the vice is in the refusal to see any merit except in one's own country and its products and the attempt to exclude anything superior coming from abroad so as to avoid humiliating comparisons and thus preserve the appearance if not the reality of achievement.

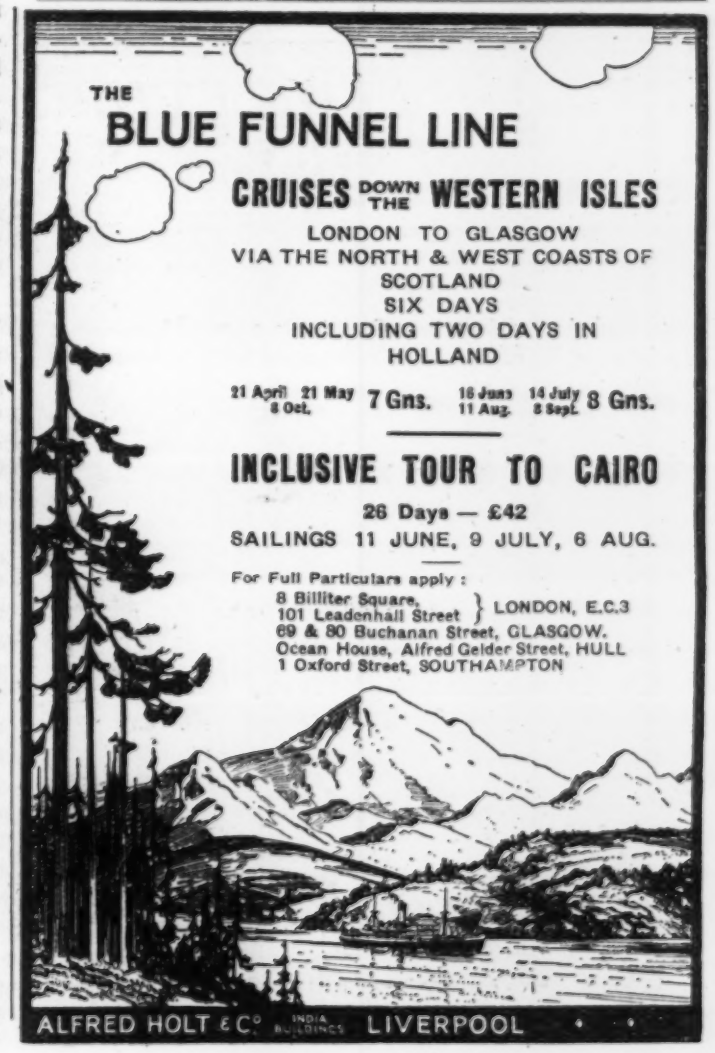
Many musicians whose love of music and ambition for their beloved art is the chief motive and inspiration of their lives are prevented from always speaking their minds openly and freely by fear of being misunderstood and misrepresented to the hazarding of their means of livelihood. Therefore, it is not often that we hear said in public what is often murmured in private, and for this reason all music-lovers will welcome and applaud Mr. Lionel Tertis's speech at the Musicians' Club, with Mr. Robert Mayer in the chair, on March 28th.

There is no doubt that Sir Thomas Beecham himself would like to say many of the things Mr. Tertis has said. Sir Thomas has never lacked audacity and he has often uttered in public severe and uncomfortable home-truths that badly needed saying. Sir Thomas Beecham has also shown himself to be an incorruptible lover of music, but even he is not as independent as he thinks he is. He has created the very fine London Philharmonic Orchestra and by dint of hard work, tireless energy and his own extraordinary ability as a conductor has made it almost self-supporting. Nevertheless, I think that Mr. Lionel Tertis's strictures, which he applied to *all* our orchestras, are true. After referring to the fact that this country produces no great instrumental virtuosos he went on to say:

> But we do possess orchestral players who are spoken of as second to none—I do not think it an exaggeration to say they are superior to any—but their capabilities are nullified by the conditions under which they are obliged to work. In our English orchestras we have superlative talent, and by far the greatest medium for the musical propaganda of our country in the way of executive art; but unfortunately in our orchestral interpretative effort we are producing quantity and not the quality that we might—in other words it is mass production.

Now Mr. Tertis, having retired from a distinguished career as the most eminent viola player in this country, is free to say what is undoubtedly true and what few English musicians either dare or care to say in public. Even the independent Sir Thomas Beecham is too harassed by the difficulties of keeping his own excellent orchestra, the London Philharmonic, afloat to dare to admit that it might be even better than it is. In passing I may say that in my opinion Mr. Tertis does not go quite far enough in his criticism. One cannot but welcome the daring honesty of his admission that we do not produce in this country great instrumental virtuosos. As he says, we have no Kreisler, no Casals and no Rachmaninov. *But we shall have them in the future*, if patriotic musicians like Mr. Tertis have their way. Nevertheless, I think it is an exaggeration for Mr. Tertis to say that our orchestral players are superior to any. Shall we find it easy, for example, to replace Mr. Lauri Kennedy as first 'cellist in the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra? The very fact that the B.B.C. had Mr. Kennedy back to lead the 'cellos for the Toscanini festival at the Queen's Hall last summer suggests that it is not easy. I do not know why Mr. Kennedy left the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, and I am not personally acquainted with him, but I would not be surprised to learn that a sensitive musician such as Mr. Kennedy found the work excessive and the conditions too gruelling to be able to give the best that he was capable of. This would support Mr. Tertis's contention that:

> Those in authority expect of the orchestral player more concerts than it is possible for him to cope with properly, and the strain of these many concerts without adequate preparation results in the partial eclipse of our orchestral players' capabilities.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Mr. Tertis points out that our orchestras are frequently called upon to do between eight and nine hours in the day, and he gives us as a typical day of the London Philharmonic Orchestra the following:

> Morning rehearsal: three hours.
> Afternoon—gramophone session: three hours.
> Evening—a concert: two to two and a half hours.

Then he takes as example the B.B.C. Promenade Concerts, in which the B.B.C. Orchestra is called upon to give:

> Rehearsal every morning—public performance every night—the concerts too lengthy and the nightly strain, through frequently heavy programmes, too great.

I have often cited the Promenade Concerts as examples of too lengthy programmes, and quite apart from the fact that all our orchestras suffer from what Mr. Tertis describes as "too few hours of preparation," there is also the fact that continuous playing without sufficient rest produces boredom and lack of interest in the players, who become, through no fault of their own, stale and incapable of further and higher efforts.

It is quite beside the mark for Sir Thomas Beecham to quote figures showing that for the year the London Philharmonic Orchestra does not play more than an average of 31 hours a week. It is not what the average spread over a year amounts to but the average as spread over the most busy season that matters. Naturally, Sir Thomas is putting up the best case for his orchestra he can, since it has to work hard to live at all as it has no government or departmental subsidy. This only makes the case against the B.B.C. subsidised orchestra stronger, and emphasises the need for a subsidy for the London Philharmonic.

While I am on this subject I may add that there has always been a section of English musicians, and unfortunately of the Press, that resents bitterly the slightest criticism of musical conditions in this country. It is notorious that foreign musicians have incurred great unpopularity for daring to point out some of our defects which they, like all decent musicians, were only concerned with improving to the benefit of the musical life of this country. But no, not a word of criticism must be uttered anywhere in the opinion of these people, who can only be afraid of their inferiority being exposed. But Mr. Lionel Tertis and Sir Thomas Beecham are not afraid, and Mr. Tertis has done music in this country a great service by his candid and disinterested criticism, and all conscientious and patriotic English musicians will be grateful to him for it.

W. J. TURNER

THE K-H NEWSLETTER SERVICE

(FOUNDED JUNE 30th, 1936)

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SHIVER SISTERS

If you are tired of reading that all is lost and that democracies must suck up to the dictators, allow me to send you a personal letter once a week which puts a contrary view. Not that I'm complacent - far from it - but I've faith in democracy provided it's told the facts, especially the grim ones. Write for particulars

Stephen King-Hall

THE MOVIES

"A Yank at Oxford," at the Empire
"The Drum," at the Odeon
"La Tendre Ennemie," at Studio One
"Le Roi S'Amuse," at the Academy

IT would be tedious to pick out inaccuracies and oddities in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer conception of Oxford, and I suppose it would be pedantic to complain that they have presented to the millions a picture of University life without the faintest suggestion that anyone ever thinks of working there. No, I am wrong, there is one: Robert Taylor's tutor asks him what he is reading, and Bob replies: "*Gone With the Wind*, sir; but I'm only half-way through." For the rest we get no nearer learning than the interior of a university bookshop; and we are there not so much to look at the books (though there *is* some rather grand talk about bidding at Sotheby's) as to observe the very sexy behaviour of the bookseller's wife (Vivien Leigh). At the end of the picture she is so thoroughly disgraced that the bookshop has to be transferred to Aldershot: this raised the loudest laugh of the evening. So much for the Idea of a University, which is clearly not Newman's. The story concerns—as everybody knows by now—a conceited American athlete who excites first the disgust and then the affection of his English fellow-undergraduates. By a similar process he wins the heart of that dimpled darling, Maureen O'Sullivan. No one suggests better than Miss O'Sullivan the hearties' delight, the loyal little tow-path and grand-stand cheerer, the stand-no-nonsense, tip-tilted, ripping good sort. Taylor walks, runs and rows through his part with bravado and ease, Lionel Barrymore contributes to his monotonous gallery another small-town poppa, Griffith Jones stands up nobly, and not too facetiously, for English youth, and Messrs. Gwenn and France, not too crustily, for the Senior Common Room. The most astonishing moments come from Edward Rigby as a highly poetic old scout; never did I think to see a college servant look so wistful at the sound of those bells which turn Oxford into an inferno on Sunday mornings.

The Drum is the first film to make one really grateful for colour. It is not yet used with any appreciation of its dramatic possibilities (for that we must wait for the collaboration of the artist), but it is at least much better and gentler than the Techniblaze we have been used to, and it is applied to a subject which really demands it. The film is based on a story of the North-West Frontier by A. E. W. Mason, one of those stories about a fanatic tribal prince about to lead a vast but vaguely defined revolt against the British Raj. In black and white it would have passed; in colour the magnificent mountain scenery lifts it well out of the commonplace. The suave presence and beautiful voice of Raymond Massey give distinction to the villainous rebel, and we enjoy too the coy and multitudinous charms of Sabu as little Prince Azim. He chums up with a kilted drummer-boy, and when the revolt begins succeeds in warning the English forces in time to avert the worst and save the lives of Captain Carruthers (Roger Livesey) and his plucky Mrs. (Valerie Hobson). These and the other Britons are more reasonably handled than the sahibs of *Elephant Boy*, but it must be admitted that polite English facetiousness, however authentic, makes poor screen entertainment. Much the most amusing passage of the film is a speech of the sergeant-major to the ranks, instructing them

Easter 1938

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 15

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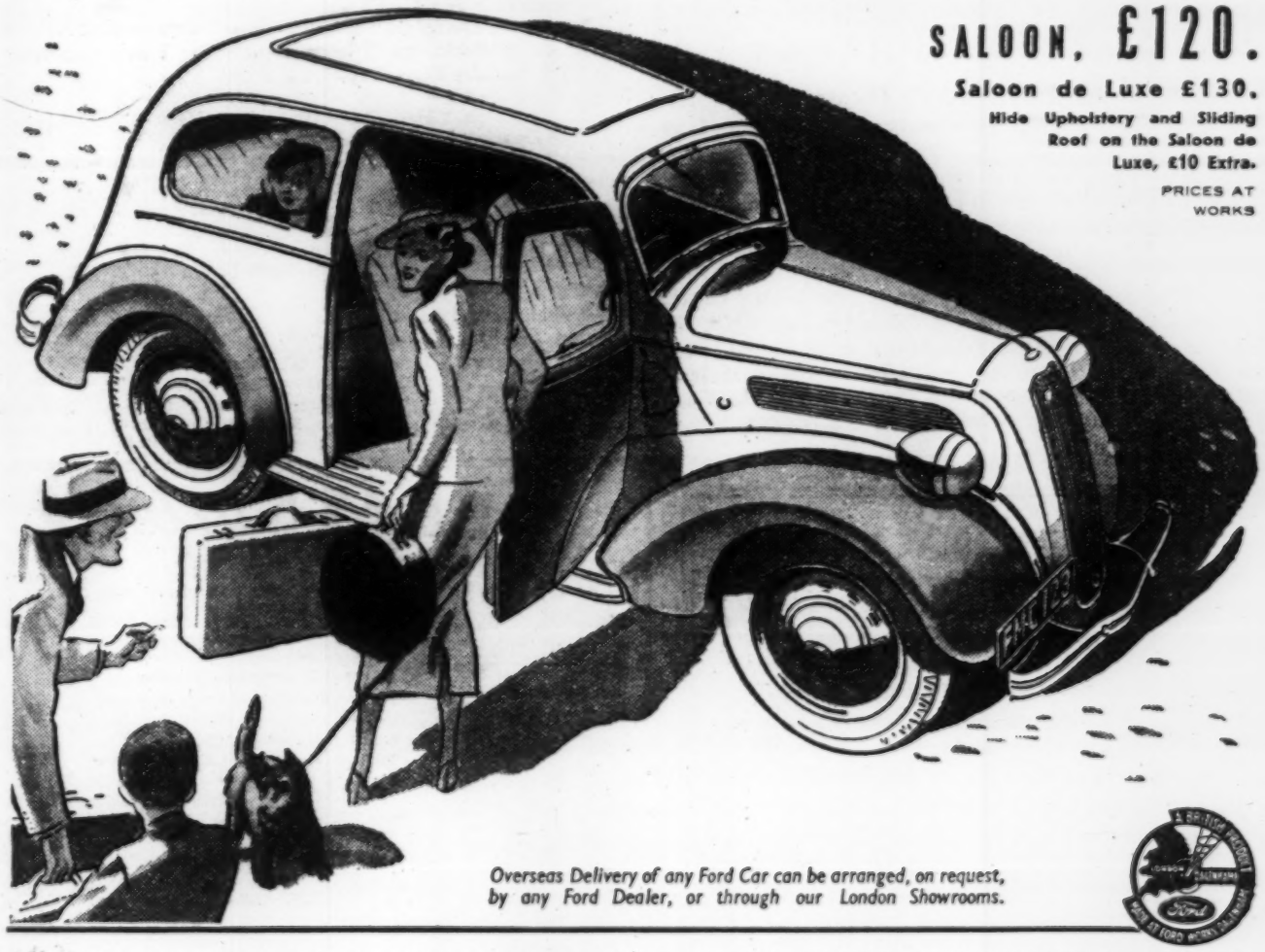

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how to behave at a Mohammedan party: "it doesn't matter what the entertainment is, snakes or stomach-waggling or whatnot, I want to see a look of rapture on every face."

France lets us down this week, gently, it is true, but unmistakably. *La Tendre Ennemie*, adapted from a play by A. P. Antoine, is a mordant little fantasy in which the three principal men in the life of Madame Dupont return as ghosts to a party given in celebration of her daughter's approaching marriage. Like her own, it is to be a *marriage de convenance*, and since Mme. Dupont had made all three unhappy by her failure to run away with the man she loved, it is the ghosts' intention to prevent family history from repeating itself. The unhappy past is shown in a series of sepia-coloured flash-backs which, though they are too lengthy to be allowed to remain silent, recapture something of the charm of the silent days. This part of the film is clever and amusing, but the poltergeist comedy at the wedding party needs lighter handling than it receives from M. Ophuls. *La Tendre Ennemie* has many virtues, but they remain incidental. *Le Roi S'Amuse* sets out to mock all political parties in a farcical story of a mythical king who visits Paris to sign a Trade Agreement. In spite of a brilliant cast and many witty episodes, the film suffers from that exaggerated playing for laughs which is so unusual in French studios. Indiscreet direction (Pierre Colombier) can evidently spoil the work even of such players as Victor Francen and Raimu. But André Lefaur is amusing as a sort of Marquis de Blimp, and Gaby Morlay, resisting all temptation to clown, gives, as the wife of a self-made financier, a performance of irresistible verve.

* * *

At the Everyman, Hampstead, a Marx Brothers season is in progress, which offers what may be our last chance of seeing those sublime extravaganzas *Animal Crackers* (Groucho as Capt. Spalding, explorer) this week, and *Monkey Business* next week. Another revival of unusual interest is that of Pudovkin's *Mother* at the Forum. PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Moonshine," at the Ambassador's Theatre

Moonshine is sub-titled A New Irish Farcical Comedy. It is farcical, but only comic in so far as the actors—Arthur Sinclair, Maire O'Neill, W. G. Fay, and others—make it so. The play itself might do well for those who have spent a motoring holiday in Ireland, and simply loved that quaint country, but on closer analysis it will not wash. There really are too many obtrusive inaccuracies—outstandingly, the "carnival" at the end. Irish village and small-town fairs generally centre round some object, such as an old and shabby goat; they do not contain figures in Clarkson fancy dresses (these seemed to have strayed from Institute merry-making in a very well-to-do Cotswold village). An Irish village hotel would be called Fogarty's, not The Eagle Inn, and would be unlikely to have on its one window apricot brocade curtains from a Chelsea flat. Nor is the Irish scene, at all times of day, bathed in perpetual lemon-yellow sunset. And tourists, whatever impression they may make, are received with almost alarming urbanity. It may be trivial to quarrel with these details, but there was not enough of anything else in *Moonshine* to distract the mind from them.

This should not be wholly condemned as an entertainment, because Arthur Sinclair, Maire O'Neill and W. G. Fay are worth seeing under any conditions. They each carry round a world with them; they can each give the most uncertainly sketched-in character an almost violent authenticity. No part played by a first-rate Irish actor, giving his full measure, can seem improbable. Arthur Sinclair's Tim Usher, Maire O'Neill's Mrs. Fogarty—with that brooding fatefulness, that expressive-of-volumes sideways twitch of the nose—and W. G. Fay's optimistic Jerry Murphy ought really not to be missed. Mr. Niall Macginnis as a sort of local Hamlet is, in some indefinable way, too urban, and Miss Esme Gullan as the Ballyshane ingenue is less convincing than she labours to be. Ballyshanes abound more and more with these two types of young character—the youth born for something better and the Hollywood miss—they are both full of comic (or sad) possibilities, but both want at once hard-boiled and subtle playing. . . . *Moonshine* is about the vicissitudes of an Englishman who comes to Ireland, accidently captures the local imagination, gets cast for a role he is not anxious to fill, is kidnapped, rescued and falls in love. There is a good deal of knockabout. The town band and the town row come in well; they are heard off—and might be made to sound a little more realistic. What, in the long run, is wrong with *Moonshine* is that the Irish characters, though *made* living and real, remain on their own, in space: they do not compose into anything. The play evaporates, though the people do not.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, April 9th—
"Samson Agonistes," Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich. And April 11th–13th.

SUNDAY, April 10th—
John Strachey on his new book, "What Are We To Do?" Royal Hotel, Woburn Sq., 11 and 2.30. Tickets, 1s. for two lectures or 2s. 6d. with lunch.
J. Langdon-Davies on "America—Now," Conway Hall, 11.
J. F. Horrabin on "Imperialism: in Three Continents," 153 Finchley Road, 6.15.

MONDAY, April 11th—
E. Nesbit on "Has Chamberlain Sold Us to the Dictators?" 39 Doughty Street, 8.30.
"Macbeth." Opening of Shakespeare Festival, Stratford-on-Avon.

TUESDAY, April 12th—
Dr. Cecil Roth on "The Jewish Contribution to Civilisation," Friends House, 1.20.
Hampstead Peace Council Meeting Against National Government's Foreign Policy. Hampstead Town Hall, 8.15.

WEDNESDAY, April 13th—
"Wild Oats," Princes.

THURSDAY, April 14th—
F.P.S.I. Easter Conference, till April 18th. St. Christopher School, Letchworth. Speakers include Miss W. G. Rinder, W. B. Curry, Wilfred Macartney and Pat Sloan. Particulars from 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1.

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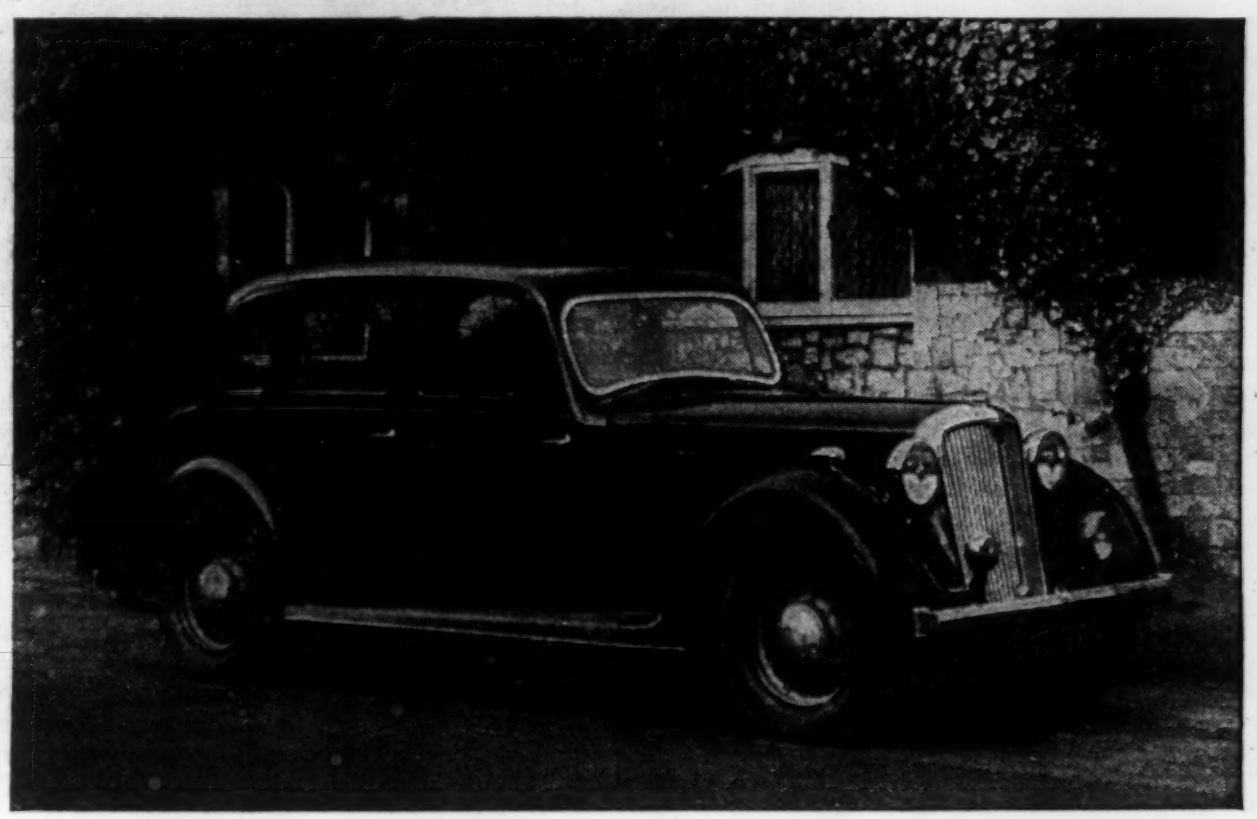

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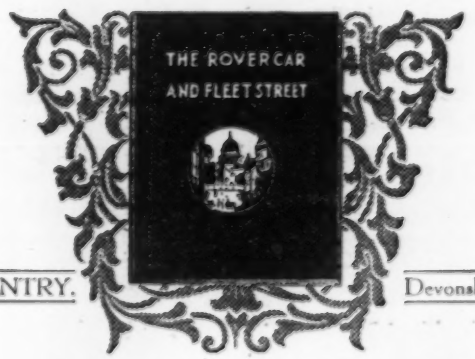

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CVS—269

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ONE of the first things that surprise a visitor landing at Dover is the English newspaper placard. Fluttering in the breeze, red and white, or black and yellow, it hints at, without disclosing, a "sensation." You run to buy a paper; there is no sensation; it is merely the English method of selling newsprint. That sort of trick, the Frenchman might imagine, could only be worked once; but it goes on day after day, year after year, stunning us regularly with as much effect as a giant wielding a paper truncheon. Sometimes for a whole week we will be mesmerised by mysterious words which have acquired a value in Fleet Street: "Staring Eyes" or "Torso" meets us in large type wherever we go. We begin to whistle it. The weeks in which there is nothing to whistle seem a little flat.

* * *

After the real news of Hitler's invasion of Austria, the press suddenly decided the crisis must end and became very flat indeed; it was high time for a return to sport, murder and "sensations." And so, about a fortnight ago, the *Daily Mail* came out with a placard "A Disgraceful Book." It is, as everyone who knows Fleet Street will understand, essential to discover from time to time a disgraceful book. This one, called *To Beg I am Ashamed*, was described on the cover as "The authentic autobiography of a London prostitute"—a description which, apparently, shocked the editor of the *Daily Mail*. For a woman writing her own life to describe herself as a prostitute when there is that much more English phrase, "a woman of a certain character" was, of course, a bad beginning. The editor of the *Daily Mail* went on to quote the first sentence of the book:

> Because I was born a lady and still look one, "How on earth do you come to be doing this?" is the first question most men ask me when they pick me up on the streets.

"The promise of salacity" contained (according to the editor of the *Daily Mail*) in this sentence was "borne out" by the rest of the book. He did not, of course, read it, but made "an examination of its contents." It was a disgraceful book. It should never have been written. It must never be published. So, a week before publication, he demanded that the book should be withdrawn.

* * *

That the *Daily Mail* had got hold of a good news story was proved by the fact that two days later it was cribbed by the *Daily Mirror*. The *Daily Mirror's* placard read "A Vile Book" and while the *Daily Mail* had been content with a restrained denunciatory half-column, the *Daily Mirror* devoted to it a whole page. The headline "Ban this book *to-day*" (i.e., as soon as the *Daily Mirror* had printed its story) was followed by an article of hysterical abuse beginning "Before me lies the vilest book that has ever left the modern printing press." (But hasn't Mr. James Douglas finally pegged out a claim for D. H. Lawrence?) Despite the fact that the book was not yet published, the writer of the article proceeded to "gut" it, quoting passages and adding such phrases as "after this shocking scene," "these are damnable passages," etc. Readers who, finding these passages rather flat, might have wondered what all the uproar was about, were assured that the book contained other passages that "could appear in no newspaper." The *Daily Mail* had objected to the book's "sordid realism"; the *Daily Mirror* complained that it "showed only the glamour." As hot journalism, though late in the field, the *Mirror* article won hands down. Meanwhile, before any of the Sunday papers could have *their* dip, a copy of the book had been sent by the Public Morality Council to the Home Secretary, and the publishers, Messrs. George Routledge, were persuaded to "withhold" it. They made the following statement:

> Messrs. Routledge's legal advisers and others who have read this book concur with Messrs. Routledge's opinion that it is not indecent. It is appreciated, however, that should the book find its way into the hands of uneducated and ill-balanced persons—a possibility that they cannot now ignore in face of the publicity so widely accorded to it in a section of the press—its intention might be misunderstood, and the author's whole theme be missed—that her mode of life is pitiable and hopeless.

Those who do not know the wording of the English obscenity laws may be surprised to learn that their choice of reading is determined by the susceptibility of "uneducated and ill-balanced persons." The Campbell Act, under which these cases fall, was designed to apply to commercial pornography and not to books of the *To Beg I am Ashamed* class at all, but by a later ruling any book is now obscene which tends "to corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences." This may mean, literally, any book at all. The dictionary and the Bible are prime corrupters of youth. Luckily, few cases of literary obscenity are brought to court, and the classics have been left alone. There is a good deal of discrepancy when it comes to modern literature. Thus, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is banned and *Ulysses* is not; though, legally, I should have thought they are equally obscene. A common informer can bring an action against any book he pleases. In recent years the most stupid and surprising example of how this law can work was the banning of James Hanley's novel *Boy*, after it had been published for a couple of years and read by thousands of people. If *To Beg I am Ashamed* had been published and proceeded against, I daresay it might have been banned, though a good deal would depend on the court in which it happened to be tried. The way in which it has actually been censored—by being simultaneously splashed and hushed up by the press before publication—seems to me extremely disagreeable. There is no reason why this method should not be employed as successfully against a masterpiece: what is to prevent the editor of the *Daily Mail* or *Daily Mirror* from adopting exactly the same tactics, denouncing it, quoting it, sensationalising it and finally putting it into the hands of the Home Secretary? Remember, when it comes to evidence, literary merit is held to be irrelevant. In the *Well of Loneliness* case Mr. Desmond MacCarthy and other critics were not allowed to give evidence though they were in court.

* * *

And the book itself, with its rather novelettish title? Well, it is not so sensational, but a pleasantly written, somewhat shapeless autobiography, in which the dreary routine of the author's life is enlivened by sharp observation of others. It is more interesting than other recent books of the underworld written by tramps, cat-burglars or policemen, simply because few prostitutes have written their reminiscences, and the material is new. Most novels about prostitutes have been written by men, and it is for its unflattering view of men that *To Beg I am Ashamed* would have been worth recommending. So far as obscenity goes, I should have thought it was fairly innocuous. How on earth the critic of the *Daily Mirror* managed to discover "glamour" in this book I cannot imagine; its effect was, rather, of a jaunty and depressing emptiness. As Messrs. Routledge say, in their letter published this week, it has the merit of being unsentimental, though the author is probably franker about other people than about herself. On the whole she seems to give a true picture of a prostitute's life in London. Indeed, it can only be the truth of her account which makes it unpalatable; for if she had dished it all up as fiction, decorated it with champagne and sumptuous hangings, and allowed the economics of her existence to recede into the distance, her book would have been like countless other "thrilling" novels about a *demi-monde* which are let past by our public moralists. Telling the story as she did in the first person, with some sharp and unflattering detail, it comes too near home. She might still have got away with it if she had substituted Paris for London and written "translated from the French" on the title-page. Her final mistake was to admit that she walks the streets of her own choice. Un-English, we'll all agree.

G. W. STONIER

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Miss Bendix. By NAOMI ROYDE SMITH. *Macmillan.* 4s. 6d.
Night and the City. By GERALD KERSH. *M. Joseph.* 8s. 6d.
My Wife's the Least of It. By WILLIAM GERHARDI. *Faber and Faber.* 10s. 6d.
O Absalom! By HOWARD SPRING. *Collins.* 8s. 6d.
A Traveller Came By. By SALLY CARSON. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 8s. 6d.

What makes most novels tedious is that they are cluttered up with so much that is inorganic, unessential, non-individual. Some novelists smell of the library, some of the boudoir, many of the bedroom; of how few can we say that we never catch a stale whiff of the lumber attic!

In so far as they are mere purveyors supplying a definite demand, one cannot complain; most people ask little more of their fiction than that it should tell a story and remain roughly true to the audible and visible surface of life as they know it. For them the Aristotelian pleasure of recognition is enough; τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο, this is that, likeness is all But more discriminating readers find all this photographic reproduction a nuisance; they long to say to the author: "Indicate your setting and your people as quickly as you can, and I'll collaborate with you: after all, I know what it's like to have a bath, to arrive late at a party, to walk along Oxford Street on a spring morning Let's get on to whatever it is that is new, fresh, significant, and don't dilute it with trivialities. I expected a drink when I came to you; water I can get out of my own tap." Of course, the exceptional novelist, the novelist with poetic power, turns the water into wine, clothing the commonplaces of life with significance and beauty; and this is what leads the rest into their painstaking descriptions of the humdrum round. To bathe with Lawrence, attend a party with Proust, walk down the windy street with Mrs. Woolf—they are delightful occupations just because we feel that we are doing these things for the first time. The ordinary novelist devotes page after page to events and scenes which, though perfectly life-like, neither stir the imagination, advance the plot, nor explain character, but only show us that the people in his book live in the same external world as ourselves; and this we are willing to believe on very slender evidence. "The broken bottle-neck glitters on the dam, the mill-wheel casts a black shadow—and there you have the moonlight night." If only the novelist would abjure super-fatted fiction; if only he would constantly ask himself whether he is being readable, whether he is flattering and beguiling the imagination of the reader, or simply cramming him with mouthfuls of undeniable, but indigestible, fact.

Of these five Miss Royde Smith alone selects. One is sure of the sincerity of an author who publishes a long short story: it is, with publishers, a most unpopular form. A pity; for many an author has hit upon an idea for which neither 30 nor 300 pages is the proper length, but 120. Miss Royde Smith sticks resolutely to her story, that of an old maid who in her youth rejected her only suitor in order to look after her widowed father, devoted her life to this end, and after his death was left in reduced circumstances. Miss Bendix has lived a life of unquestioning piety, but her faith is suddenly swept away in the excitement of an astronomical revelation, the sudden personal experience of the motion of the earth around the sun. "Cradled in her chair, she felt herself swing downwards through space. . . . She did not think, she experienced." The experience is so overwhelming that it leads her to a kind of sun-worship, until one day she drops in to a lecture given by an eminent astronomer who disturbs her once more by treating the sun not as the creator of all things, but as a rather small star among millions of other stars. She had lost God, and now she loses the sun, too. So far I follow Miss Royde Smith, and with pleasure; but I cannot quite perceive the nature of the further revelation which at the end restores to Miss Bendix all that she had rejected. This may very well be my own weakness and loss; indifferently in tune with the infinite, I confess to a marked preference for the effable. When an author writes:

> The swelling fugue pursued its themes into an intolerable splendour until, faintly at first, and then with an increase of reiterated lament, the created made its cry; uncomprehending, separate, afraid. The might, majesty and power of light shone over and was dark beneath the voice of human need . . .

I cannot easily distinguish the result from other apocalyptic obscurities—Pyramidal, eschatological, or British Israelite. I can only say that I enjoyed *Miss Bendix* as far as page 140, just as I enjoy books on relativity as far as page 20.

Night and the City is a lively panorama of the London underworld, which carries the stamp of truth all over it. Mr. Kersh explores with fascinated tenacity the ambit of those who live by their wits: blackmailers, wrestling promoters, tarts, night-club proprietors, ponces, go-betweens of all sorts. For these people he has a very sharp eye indeed, and a sharp ear, too, for their talk as they bully, cringe and exchange knock-knocks and Little Audreys. His detail does not seem so redundant, because to most novel-readers it must be more or less unfamiliar. He paints with clean strokes: a cheap prostitute's bedroom, for example:

> On the floor stood a three-day-old cup of tea, scummed with white, into which an old stocking hanging out of a drawer dipped, like a wick, into oil. A pink evening dress lay in the fender. On the mantelpiece, between a photograph of Robert Taylor and a litho of the Virgin Mary, stood an uncorked lysol bottle, a bunch of decomposing violets in a milk bottle, a china cat for good luck, and six long bars of ash where cigarettes had burned themselves out.

In the centre he sets a subtle study of the gutter criminal, his motives laziness and vanity, his heroes the gangsters of the American movie. *Night and the City* would make a first-rate novel but for the unreality of the straight characters Adam and Helen, and a tendency to inflated apostrophe of this order:

> How huge and amorphous is the city! A behemoth, maddened with paradox, swollen with inspiration, and burst with gluttony—writhing with the itch of baffled procreation—sucking into its womb the seed of the raging earth, and spattering perpetual showers of polychromatic life.

These fumes go so quickly to his head that he even forgets how to spell, and starts his next paragraph with "All similies apply to it." Skip this, and you will find the story exciting and real.

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but no one ever gives a final answer or comes to a definite conclusion. Every sort of addition and subtraction is made to the original story, every rumoured influence approached, but at no point is there any certainty that any one of the magnates has even read the thing. The agent can never be pinned down, he answers all questions with "Might be. Perhaps. You never know. We must hope for the best." Meanwhile the magnates themselves merge into one another like the shadows they are; rumours seep through of galactic amalgamations, nebular contractions, metamorphoses, expansions. Gus Oppenheimer, the ultimate and unattainable, crosses and recrosses the Atlantic, appears in London like a comet. Nobody can ever be reached, no one can ever say for certain what the position is, everything is provisional. Mr. Gerhardi shows ingenuity and inexhaustible variety in his study of international inanity: the theme demands elaboration, but I think it is elaborated just a little too much. And the marrying off of Mr. Baldridge to a rich lunatic seems an arbitrary conclusion. But the author's exuberance and gift for cumulative complication remind us at moments of Ben Jonson himself.

Mr. Howard Spring gives us four helpings of everything. His opening section, describing the life of the poor in Victorian Manchester, is excellent; the autobiographical narrative of the wanderings of a gifted boy has in it something of the spirit of *David Copperfield*. But when William Essex and his friend Dermot O'Riorden grow up, they acquire no mature individuality; we only know about them what the author tells us, that the first became a successful writer, the second, in spite of the temptations of Irish nationalism, a successful maker of modern furniture. William's son, Oliver, turns out badly, and there is an unhappy rivalry between father and son for the love of a girl called Livia Vaynol, who is thus introduced:

> . . . that sudden apparition of the golden hair, so immediately impressive that I did not at once notice the broad white brow, the eyes that had the blue colour of a cornflower, the compassionate mouth, and the way the whole face fell down to the small pointed chin, so that it was shaped like the petal of a rose.

This girl shilly-shallies for hundreds of pages, only plumping for Oliver at the outbreak of the War. After the War Oliver goes from bad to worse, joins the Black and Tans, and, of course, kills Dermot's son in Ireland. This obvious piece of melodrama stifled my interest in a book of considerable vitality but excessive length.

A Traveller Came By, though not nearly so long, suffers even more from the fault of diffuseness. Miss Carson has a good theme, the misery of a German self-exiled after the death of his sister and her Jewish lover while attempting to escape into Austria: his own Nazi patrol was responsible for the disaster. He is befriended and sheltered by his English friend, Michael Reader, and Michael's wife Elspeth. It seemed at first as though Miss Carson, with her sensitive feeling for German and English ideas, was going to illuminate her subject; but she loses it in a welter of trivial domesticities, including this sort of dialogue between Michael and Elspeth:

> "It's the first frost. I'm glad it's a cold night—we'll be so warm, you and I. D'you remember the White Queen in *Alice?* 'In the winter we take as many as five nights together—for warmth, you know.'"
>
> He laughed, "When we get our honeymoon, darling—a real one—we'll take it in the very middle of the winter, and we'll go to the highest, coldest place we can find."

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THE REV. JAMES GATLIFF

Stations, Gentlemen. The Autobiography of James Gatliff. *Faber and Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

During the latter years of the eighteenth century, several English people who went out to India recorded their experiences there. These records form a small but interesting class of literature, and here is a welcome addition to it. William Hickey heads the class; then there is the soldier, James Bristow, and the sailor, James Scurry, both captives of Tipu Sahib; then there is an indomitable lady, Mrs. Eliza Fay; and now they are joined by this gentleman, Mr. James Gatliff, who was an officer in the 52nd Foot, and ultimately a clergyman. None of the five seem to have met in the flesh, but they stand very close together on the bookshelf. They were out East at the same time, and they have a common quality, which the East may have promoted: the power of expressing themselves naturally, and of letting themselves go.

> O never let Conscience molest or offend you,
> For Conscience should keep all the time we're in India,

sang a contemporary poet in a Calcutta newspaper, and they followed his advice. Gatliff is more aggressive than the others; he drinks, gambles, swears, kills the adjutant in a duel, and is so sensitive about his honour, that he goes too far, from the military point of view, and is advised to return home. He is always taking offence and quarelling, going into people's bedrooms with a drawn sword, getting port-bottles hurled at his head at Harrogate, pulling prominent civilians by the nose in Canton, and when he resigns his commission and can no longer challenge his fellow officers, he takes Holy Orders and insults the Bishop of Chester instead. The Church has often welcomed a gallant soldier to her bosom, and then wondered whether she had better have done it. And Gatliff must have been particularly difficult to cherish, for he was not merely hot-tempered: he enjoyed permanent estrangements. The worst of these was with his elder brother, John; they had been friends since boyhood, but a tiff arose, and since John was also in Holy Orders and could influence preferment, both of them made the most of it. Naturally one cannot blame all this upon poor India. Still, India does seem to have had a loosening effect upon the English character at that time, instead of the constipating effect which she exercises to-day.

This fighting parson is not easily placed. He has high spirits and courage, he is intelligent, and sensitive to literature, music and art; he is decent about the natives and the lower orders, and condemns flogging with a vigour which was unusual at the time, and is far from usual to-day. He is in many respects a fine fellow. Yet there is something crude and repellent about him, something which comes out in his ugly mug, and in the truculent title which has been affixed to his autobiography: *Stations, Gentlemen*. Meaning, Take your places for the duel. With cynicism and frankness, he recounts his adventures at the request of his son, and reveals the wisdom of a man who has known the world through knocking it about. A blue-eyed girl, Miss Ogle, ran away with someone else just as he thought he was going to win her. Well, one understands Miss Ogle. And one understands the feelings of Mrs. Straubengie, his colonel's wife, when he was sick on her carpet. Mrs. Straubengie was formidable; a subaltern remarked to her that "her sympathy, though un-

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—*Saturday Review of Literature*

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doubtedly genuine, is too domineering to be palatable; her very pity is tinctured with authority." He got on with her, though; he seems to have been best with women. It is his friendships with men that go wrong, no doubt because he is the epitome of manliness.

He was born in 1766, of rich Manchester folk, wrote his autobiography in 1824, just as he was expecting to be imprisoned yet again in the Fleet, through the machinations of the Bishop, and died in 1831, as rector-triumphant of Gorton in Yorkshire. He is well worth meeting, and it is a pity that he has not been better edited. There is a brief "Notes" at the end of the book, but no attempt is made to place him in his age, or to explain the various historical references in his pages. The manuscript is, so to speak, dumped at our feet. We are not told whether its spelling and punctuation have been modernised, or whether its chapter-divisions and chapter-titles are original, or whether it has been expurgated. Every here and there, four dots occur in the text. Do these mean cuts? It is a pity that such an interesting and indeed important little document should be presented so casually.

E. M. FORSTER

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

With Stanley in Africa. By WILLIAM HOFFMANN. *Cassell.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This book purports to be written by a survivor of Stanley's expedition across Africa for the relief and rescue of Emin Pasha, the last representative of Egyptian rule to hold out in Equatoria against the Mahdist flood which submerged the Soudan and destroyed Gordon; and, according to the description printed by the publishers on the dust-jacket, Mr. Hoffmann, the author, "who was the great explorer's personal attendant and constant companion," "throws new light on the famous expedition and shows Stanley as he really was." And yet, believe it or not, the name of William Hoffmann (who "was Stanley's personal servant, bodyguard, and closest friend"), nowhere appears in the gigantic record of that expedition left by its leader; he is left unmentioned in Stanley's posthumously published autobiography; and an equal reticence concerning him is exercised in the records left by all the other participants in the quest for Emin. Such uniform silence in respect of Mr. Hoffmann naturally leads the reader to give particular attention to all that Mr. Hoffmann says.

Believe it or not, it was in the summer of 1884 that Mr. Hoffmann first met his "Master." "William," as Stanley later called him (so we learn) happened to be sent to the hotel at which Stanley was staying, to deliver a bag to Mrs. French Sheldon, who was also staying in that hotel; and in some way which is not explained, his fluency in French and German impressed the explorer, who, one day soon after the first meeting (when William was perhaps delivering another bag) put his hands firmly on William's shoulders and asked, "Would you like to leave the bag trade and look after me instead?" William assented; and so, a little later, still in "The summer of 1884" the two "set forth on our travels together." At least, that is what William says on p. 19. His idea of the duration of summer is unusual, for on p. 21 he observes, "so, at the beginning of November, 1884, the long association between Stanley and myself at length started. Together we set off for the German capital." Perhaps it was between the first meeting and this setting off that Stanley told his young henchman those facts about his early life which would give so much interest to Mr. Hoffmann's second chapter if Stanley had not himself related them in his autobiography. In the same way, it would be valuable to know how Stanley described his impressions of Bismarck to William, if he had not described them over fifty years ago in the same words on p. 396 of his book on the founding of the Congo State.

Believe it or not, Stanley later took William to America on his lecturing tour. William places the first lecture in New Orleans, and says that it was here that Stanley remet Mark Twain. In doing so he conflicts with Major Pond, who organised the tour, and Albert Bigelow Paine, who devoted four thick volumes to Mark Twain's life. But perhaps that hardly matters, since a little later on William is in conflict with Stanley himself.

This discrepancy occurs on p. 30, when William relates that he was present in London at the parting between Gordon and Stanley, just before Gordon left for the relief of Khartoum. "'You will never return,' said Stanley. 'You are going to your death.' 'I have my duty to do,' Gordon replied." Noble words, worthy of eminent Victorians. The odd thing is that according to Stanley's printed record (*The Congo and the Founding of Its Free State*), the explorer was still in the heart of Africa when Gordon set off for Egypt in January, 1884. Odder still, he explains in a note on Gordon appended to his autobiography exactly what he would have done had he been in Gordon's place; and so far from thinking that Gordon was going out to certain death, he even concludes his summary with the remark, "I hold that Gordon need not have died."

Believe it or not, William Hoffmann was a member of the heroic band which made the extraordinary journey from Yambuya to Emin's Equatorial Province, through the then unknown Ituri forest; it was he who, taught by Surgeon Parke (though Parke says nothing of it in his long account), poulticed Stanley into health after his sickness at Fort Bodo; it was he who first saw the smoke of Emin's steamer on the lake (though Stanley in his diary sets out that it was he himself who descried the vessel afar off through his binoculars). And so on. Hoffmann was there all the time; all through the stirring events so admirably described in *In Darkest Africa* and now so feebly paraphrased. For, though William was so close to Stanley, so constantly with him, he has not recollected a single thought or expression of the explorer's which Stanley had not himself, a generation ago, printed for all to read.

Believe it or not. And, personally, I do not believe a word of it. If the story Mr. Hoffmann tells is true, he has been the victim of the most remarkable conspiracy of silence since the days of Baron Munchausen; he has been an involuntary stowaway of the pen, a literary invisible man. I prefer to believe in Stanley, in Pond, in Paine, in Casati, and in Jephson, Jameson, Parke and the rest of the known survivors of the Emin Relief Expedition, not one of whose books of recollection or adventure anywhere mentions Mr. William Hoffmann.

After the Emin expedition, Mr. Hoffmann asserts that on Stanley's recommendation he spent a year fighting the slave-traders under Sir Francis de Winton, and that subsequently, again on Stanley's recommendation, he entered the service of the Congo State. His account of the journey he made with Lieutenant Milz to the Equatorial region is too sparing of dates and details to be easily checked, but when in chapter XVII he tells us that at the end of April, 1895, he left Charing Cross for

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Brussels and the Congo State, and then gives an account of his part in the Congo war against the Arabs, Mr. Hoffmann is once more in conflict with history; for, according to all the accepted versions, the war was over six months before he says he left England! After that, it is hardly surprising to find that the execution of Emin's murderers usually ascribed to Baron Dhanis, was in fact (or fancy?) carried out by our William, and that "we" (he and who?) found, in the corner of an Arab hut, Emin's boxes, scientific papers and diary. Believe it or not, these documents had been handed to the German Ambassador by the Congo State in 1893!

The publishers claim that this puerile work "throws new light" on Stanley and on the Emin Relief Expedition. It does not. It restates in weakened terms the central theme of *In Darkest Africa*, in which Stanley tells the whole story with the clear-headed, partisan exactness which always distinguished his writings. Mr. Hoffmann's account is in so many ways at variance with previous and better documented books on the subject that Messrs. Cassell and Co. owe it to their reputation to amend their description, and to tell us something more concerning this previously unmentioned "personal servant, bodyguard and closest friend" of the greatest explorer of the nineteenth century.

A. J. A. SYMONS

THE RELIGION OF THE STAKE

Inquisition and Liberty. By G. G. COULTON. *Heinemann.* 15s.

Dr. Coulton has written a useful book, but one which might make even an inquisitor weep. He gives a learned and sober account of the origin, history, organisation, and methods of the Inquisition. If he had written the book fifteen years ago, the unexpressed assumption in the minds of author and reader would certainly have been that we thanked God we were not as our ancestors were. We assumed then, and had assumed for half a century, that the religion of the stake had died out of civilised countries. To-day we know better. We know that the horrible barbarities practised by the Church in God's name have been resurrected in the greater part of Europe and are being practised with the same methods and the same organisation in the name of Fascism, National Socialism, or Communism. It is true that the dictators and totalitarian states do not actually burn their heretics and Jews at the stake, but that is only because with human beings fashion changes as erratically in their methods of torture and killing one another as in those of love-making and dressing, and also because the engines of sadistic wrath have become so much more efficient. The Fascists the other day succeeded in killing 600 "Red" heretics in Barcelona by means of an air-raid in less than half an hour, and in addition they maimed and mutilated hundreds of others and destroyed a large amount of heretic property. Such a feat was beyond the dreams or power of the orthodox in the fourteenth century. It is a long business burning a man alive with faggots, vine-branches and straw, and it is also extremely expensive; we have the bills which show that it cost rather more than £32 (at present prices) to burn four heretics at Carcassonne in 1323.

The Inquisition evolved as the instrument of the Catholic Church for dealing with heretics. At first it merely regularised and improved existing practice and procedure. It appears to be a "natural" instinct of the human species to punish, torture, and kill people who do not agree with us. So powerful is the instinct that organisations like churches and states almost inevitably develop into vast engines of mass sadism. The church or state—or rather the ruling classes—are in possession of absolute truth, and it becomes their duty therefore to stamp out heresy. It therefore also becomes their duty to find out who are heretics in order to be able to stamp them out. The Inquisition naturally developed from an organ for protecting orthodoxy into an organ for snooping out heretics. Its methods here were precisely those of our contemporary Chekas and Gestapos. In the fourteenth century it was just as dangerous not to inform against your friend, if you knew that he read the Bible or believed in the poverty of Christ, as it is in the twentieth century not to inform against your friend if you know that he has listened to a foreign broadcast or has read an "illegal" pamphlet.

This kind of sadism and savagery becomes a vested interest of governments, once it is organised efficiently; it is inevitably reinforced by human cupidity. The medieval inquisitors, like those of the twentieth century, forfeited the property of condemned heretics, and the forfeited property went to the inquisitors, the Church or the State. The practice of trying dead heretics was introduced in order that their property might be forfeited. Such methods of government, invented by the Church of God, were too effective and lucrative to be ignored by the secular authorities, and in most parts of Europe the Inquisition became as much the instrument of the State as of the Church. Its logical result was, as Dr. Coulton's book shows, the "totalitarian" state of Ferdinand and Isabella.

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My Part in a Changing World. By EMMELINE PETHICK-LAWRENCE. *Gollancz.* 15s.

The years in which we live will figure in history as an epoch of fear. But the dangers that approach us are all external: among ourselves there persists a paralysis of the will. No one risks a daring movement: above all, no one rebels. Was it the bloodletting of the Great War that caused this moral anaemia? However one explains it, the England of the immediate pre-war period looms up out of memory as an alien island, even for those of us who went through this almost revolutionary period as adults. The Irish drilled with smuggled arms: Welsh, and even English workers flung themselves into strikes that were suppressed with the aid of the troops: women in the last months of peace were engaged in a struggle that resembled a guerilla civil war. Future generations and perhaps the younger generation of to-day will read the reminiscences of this period with a growing curiosity. What manner of women and men were these who made England for a few years so oddly un-English?

This autobiography that Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence has given us makes its valuable contribution towards an answer. She writes easily and well. One has the impression of a generous personality, spirited, capable of warm and devoted friendships, but singularly free from the warped hatreds that make the dynamics of revolution. A more kindly and charitable record of an often tragic struggle was never penned. She came of a Cornish family with a liberal and evangelical tradition. If her father, whose portrait she draws well, had strength of character, he did not lean to any fanatical extreme. Her own love of beauty in nature and art suggests a

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temperament that might have taken its ease in a very pleasant and interesting world. What made her a militant who endured six imprisonments?

She tells her story vividly and honestly, but the reader must make his own analysis. The basic experience that made revolutionaries of several of the women who led this movement was their familiarity with working-class life in an epoch immeasurably darker and uglier than our own. The formative period for Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence lay in the years when she worked as a sister in the Wesleyan Mission in the East End. It is characteristic of her that she records even bitter and tragic things with a smile. Here are her recollections of some working girls whom she took for the first time in their lives into the country:

> They had never seen the stars; they had never plucked a flower. They had never heard the cuckoo, and when they heard it for the first time they began looking about for the clock. . . . They had never seen a skylark except in a cage and they were worried when they beheld one hovering above its nest in the ground. "Here's a bird that's got a fit!" one of them cried, "it can't go up and it can't come down." . . . A field of bearded barley was hailed with delight for it seemed to promise shrimps for tea, and there were eager cries that some should be picked and taken home to be cooked.

The vote was regarded primarily as the key that would open to working women and their children the door of escape from a life of ignorance and degradation.

Mrs. Pankhurst, on the other hand, had known grinding poverty at first hand. Her background, if my memory serves me, was partly French, with traces of the Communard tradition. Of her Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence truly says that her genius might have made her "a queen on the stage or in the salon." This human tornado, who flung herself on Georgian England, had gathered during the long, difficult years of maternity and widowhood the repressed emotional force that makes history. She knew her own powers and she used others, including the writer of this book, with the ruthless strength of a dictator. A vision of destiny sustained her, and she thought of her daughter Christabel as "the anointed one," born to deliver women. In Christabel this concern for the sufferings of working-women was not the dominating motive: that for her was sex-pride.

The main but by no means the sole interest of this most readable book lies in its intimate narrative of the rise, growth and triumph of the militant movement. If it owed its irresistible driving power to Mrs. Pankhurst and its political flair to her daughter Christabel, it drew much of its appeal from the warm, infectious oratory of Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence, while her husband taught it the technique of an immense organisation that never lacked for funds. The reader is tossed alternately, as its contemporaries were, between admiration for the audacity and endurance of its young women and disgust at the obstinate stupidity and the not infrequent brutality of the opposition. The immediate effect of a militant outbreak was always to retard the cause: the long-range effect, after any interval of truce, was always to advance it. It is extremely doubtful whether without these desperate tactics the vote would ever have been won: to which one must add the rider that only the long sex-truce and the new atmosphere of the War made it easy for Parliament to yield with grace. No narrative of these painful but heroic years has been written that equals this record of a selfless and creative life. These women lifted from half mankind the depression that came from a sense of imposed inferiority.

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SPIES AND BOURGEOIS

Further. By AMELIE POSSE BRAZDOVA. *Routledge.* 15s.
The Story of "ST. 25." By SIR PAUL DUKES, K.B.E. *Cassell.* 15s.
"And Nothing Long." By RANALD MACDONELL. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.

It is easy to find out from people where they have been, what they have done and whom they know, but it is rare for the picture to be given completion and meaning by a confession of what they are. At least this is so in books of reminiscence. There is not in consequence any great deal of satisfaction to be had from them, unless one happens to be a contemporary of the writer's. They are, of course, all amateurs; one misses the blue pencil. But that isn't the whole trouble. It is most depressing to have one's passions aroused without being given a chance of satisfying them—and the writers of reminiscence, over and over again, titillate our dormant envy till it hungrily awakens and then fail to appease us with any illusion of intimacy. Here, for example, is Madame Amelie Posse Brazdova guzzling away at the past in her third volume of memoirs, promising at last to tell us about herself; yet, when it comes to the point, we get her views only on Yoga and the meaning of life. That tells one nothing. She stands, like all the rest, camouflaged among her friends and travels in the voluble disguise of the first person singular.

Of course there are clues and there is a sporting pleasure in putting them together. Madame Posse Brazdova is a wife and mother, and I believe, an artist. She belongs to the nicest people in Europe, the comfortably off and educated middle class. At the moment she is spending more than she can afford on a château in Czechoslovakia where she has a long-standing friendship with the Masaryk family. Before this, however, she was in Rome and Capri, staying in agreeable villas, giving receptions and going to them, and living (with domesticated detachment), among that engaging Whipsnade of painters, pianists, literati and the cultivated at a loose end, who turned up on perpetual holiday in the Mediterranean throughout the '20s. She draws a vigorous, sprawling and good-natured picture of those golden years that followed the prostration of Europe in 1919. War would never come again. Belief in eternal peace—in the victorious countries—was enlivened by the cult of personal (and expatriate) happiness. When an Italian servant made innumerable attempts at suicide, it was alarming, but it illustrated the pleasing diversity of human nature. There were dances at the winepress. Even the austere peasant Masaryk (who came to stay) when advised not to read the novels of a young writer because they dealt with sexual difficulties, had sufficiently grown into the new period to observe that happy people like himself might be more tolerant if they read such books. Yes, Italy was kind, Fascism seemed vulgar but probably necessary "for the Italians," and it was not until Madame Posse Brazdova realised that her sons would have to become Fascists if she stayed in Italy, that the truth dawned. So she went to Czechoslovakia—out of the frying pan into the fire. Her long portraits of people like Masaryk are the best, she enjoys character. If he dominated the '20s, this is the man of the new age:

> The well-bred young Crown Prince recoiled and looked troubled and embarrassed when Mussolini's jokes about my husband's nudes

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You will find these quotations in their context in the April **Controversy.** *Their authors are, respectively, a member of no party, a Trade Union leader, a Communist, a Trotskyist (perhaps one should say* **the** *Trotskyist) and a member of the I.L.P. In no other periodical will you find, regularly every month, such a spread of Left opinion.* **Controversy** *is the only entirely open forum. It is published monthly, at 3d. (twelve-month subscription, 3s. 6d.), and can be obtained through the Socialist Bookshop, 35 St. Bride St., London, E.C.4, or W. H. Smith bookstalls.*

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grew a bit too coarse and noisy. A big composition with a cock and a couple of sumptuous female figures, one of whom was seen from behind, in particular called forth the Duce's boisterous humour. The models had been a couple of Anticoli girls so dark skinned and sunburnt that he took them for Abyssinians and said that "that damned Africa always has to turn its back on us—and what a back!" But, mind you, it was not the word "back" that he used but another considerably lower—both anatomically and linguistically.

A youth spent in Russia studying music and then a return to Moscow, soon after the revolution, as the head of the British Intelligence network there—that is Sir Paul Dukes' story. It is a dour, observant and unemotional piece of work, and when the publishers say that *The Story of "ST. 25"* is the best secret agent book yet published they do not exaggerate. How many times, allured by the mysterious, unpleasantly pleasant emotions aroused by the word espionage, is the reader fobbed off with melodrama or revelations that are no revelations at all. This book is the real thing and it is not badly written either. Besides the intense excitement of those night crossings from Finland, the train searches, the clandestine meetings, the hiding and collecting of reports, the inventing of disguises and documents, the constant movement from house to house, and the sleigh rides, with fugitives, to the last house on the frontier before it is re-crossed again, the book does reveal a character and a human situation. Sir Paul started in the guise of a commercial traveller, became a bogus Cheka officer and a Government clerk. He joined the Red Army and the Communist Party. The spy's life is one of continuous attention to detail. Like an actor he sinks his own personality and becomes the slave of the new person he has assumed. As Sir Paul's confidence grows, it is absorbing to note his increasing dexterity, his increasing fascination, too, with the dangerous pleasure of shuffling and re-shuffling a number of selves. The appetite grows. He delivered his reports and returned again to Russia almost with passion. At its height the art leads to complete indifference and cynicism and in his early days, in the person of Korinsky, Sir Paul met such a master who was also more than his match. Luck, however, saved the English agent with Korinsky and luck is a crucial yet frequent element in the spy's life.

Sir Paul never reached the cynical stage. He conveys without excess his own sense of isolation, the curious pathos, the alternations of scrupulousness and fatalism he felt towards the people whose lives he endangered and sometimes lost by winning their help, the sedulous puritanism underlying all the mummery of the trade. There is something impressive about this cold book. It gives incidentally an interesting picture of Russia in the anarchic period and, after reading how he managed to get into the Red Army and how he got people out of prison, I find the recent trials more credible.

And Nothing Long is yet another book on the post-revolutionary situation in the Black Sea, lightly and expertly written by one who was the consul in Baku. Mr. MacDonell became a sort of agent, too, an amateur in a world of at times ferocious but also often incompetent professionals. He has many good stories and they are told without that appalling Public School humour which ruins the majority of books written by English officials. Before this dryly feckless account of one of the many English military imbroglios after the Russian revolution, there is an engaging and instructive picture of the sort of life a young man led in London in the '90s.

V. S. PRITCHETT

SPAIN UNDER FRANCO

Burgos Justice. By A. RUIZ VILAPLANA. Translated by W. HORSFALL CARTER. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

If any still believe that Franco's regime, for all its retrogressive tendencies, does at least spell order and security for a majority of the population in insurgent territory, this book will dissipate their illusions. It records the experiences of a high judicial officer with no strong political view during the first year of the war. One of his duties was to certify the finding of dead bodies within the district.

> On one of the first of these occasions where we had to officiate we found near the Burgos cemetery the body of a poor peasant of Sasamon, propped up against a shock of corn. He was a comparatively young man—strong, dark, poorly-clad, his face horribly disfigured by bullet-wounds. As always happened, nobody dared to identify him, but in one of his pockets we found a dirty, crumpled piece of paper on which was badly written in pencil, with many spelling mistakes:
>
> "I warn all comrades to get away at once . . . they beat us brutally and kill us . . . as their cause is lost they are resorting to barbarism."

One night he is awakened by the voice of the bailiff, shouting: "Don Antonio . . . get up . . . we've got seven more carcasses." On another occasion he has to assist at the exhumation of the mayor of a neighbouring town and of his two sons, aged twelve and fifteen, who had been so hurriedly buried near the roadside that a hand had remained sticking above ground. With monotonous horror the tale goes on. Hundreds of people were murdered in this district alone, where, it should be remembered, there had been no strong Left-wing movement and no resistance to the military rebellion.

Long after the "criminally incompetent" Government had set its house in order, the insurgent authorities were still encouraging clandestine shootings. A circular, dated August 18th, 1937, enjoined the health authorities to see that "bodies found abandoned outside the town" were buried in places where they should not contaminate the water supply.

Yet more significant than the evidence of continued terrorism is the quiet proof that this book gives of chaos and jobbery in insurgent territory. The only real power is wielded by the military. The civil authorities are lay figures, who go in daily fear of being denounced as half-hearted in their enthusiasm for the "Crusade."

> Those who failed to secure the necessary marks for Catholic fervour and reactionary sentiment were simply removed from their posts, and the rest, living in terror and under strict vigilance, remained in complete subjection to the military authorities.

The position of Franco is interesting. Because he had a certain Moroccan reputation, Italy and Germany backed him as the destined "Leader." So far, the Spanish people, who are blessed with a sense of humour, have resisted all attempts to "put over" his personality. De Llano reigns supreme in Andalusia, where his followers laugh contemptuously at "the dwarf of Salamanca." Mola, until his death in June, 1937, was the idol of the reactionaries in Burgos, and commanded the support of the Carlists and of Catholics of the old school. At Mola's funeral Franco, standing on the steps of the Divisional Headquarters, greeted the arrival of the coffin with a magnificent Roman salute.

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He did the gesture very well and effectively, but it so happened hat the crowd, instead of gazing at him with deep emotion, could not control their amusement, because a large and very revealing rent showed under his armpit.

If this puppet general, who has so far failed to capture the imagination of Spaniards, is unlikely to rule Spain if and when he conquers it, what of the forces behind him? The army? With the help of foreign officers and materials the Spanish army can wage a war, but it would hardly be capable of governing in times of peace. The Church? But it must have men to stand in front of it, and the Gil Robles type of politician is now discredited. The Phalanx? Apart from the fact that the Phalangists have been forcibly merged in unnatural union with the Carlists, their crusading spirit is now far from pure:

> This organisation opened its doors widely to the masses; workman and peasant saw in it, particularly, a haven of refuge from the terrorist régime of the local political boss. No questions were asked of persons who wanted to join: so that in its ranks will be found thousands of persons with Left sympathies, not to speak of Marxists, forced to choose between donning the blue shirt or death.

To the friends of Franco, the evidence of *Burgos Justice* must be profoundly disquieting, and the only thing left is to attack the character of the author. The mud has duly been slung, not, however, by insurgent Spaniards, but by an English Peer speaking in the House of Lords on December 21st, 1937. When approached by the publishers, the Noble Lord would adduce no grounds whatever for his charges, which, even if true, would have been immaterial to the evidence of the book. One can but marvel at the reckless irresponsibility of such utterances, and regret that they cannot be made elsewhere than in the Upper House.

GEOFFREY BRERETON

THE GODS REFURBISHED

The National Faith of Japan: A Study in Modern Shinto. By D. C. HOLTOM. *Kegan Paul.* 15s.

Since the publication of Aston's *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*, in 1905, there has, Dr. Holtom tells us, been no comprehensive account of Japan's national religion published in English. Though there has been an abundance of writing on the subject, there was ample justification, therefore, for the present work, and its author has, by long study of the subject in Japan and from Japanese sources, qualified himself to write it. Aston has long been out of print, so there was every reason for going over the whole ground.

The First Parents in the Shinto cosmogony were parents of the gods and of the earth, and Dr. Holtom spares us the crude accounts of how they learned the art of reproduction (1) by observing the commerce of a pair of wagtails, and (2) by infantile curiosity and experiment. Nor does he relate some further acts of creation, the obvious sexual symbolism of which has delighted the psycho-analysts. But he describes (and illustrates) typical shrines as they exist to-day, and makes the interesting observation that, as regards the *torii* (the sort of open gate before a shrine) there is a modern tendency to abolish the upward curve at the ends of the cross-pole, which was a Buddhist innovation of great aesthetic value. As the special Shinto buildings erected for the coronation ceremonies have no beauty whatsoever, one wonders whether it is the fate of the shrines themselves to be unbeautified. After all, Dr. Holtom is concerned mainly with the more modern aspects of Shinto, which is far more important to-day than ever it was before. With the abolition of extraterritoriality, the Japanese introduced an ingenious device for dodging the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom by declaring that State Shinto was not religious, and on the strength of this requiring Japanese of all religions to attend the shrines at certain times. The Buddhists did not mind but the Christians emphatically did. The curious thing is that even the Church of Rome has had to toe the line. Dr. Holtom gives us a long extract from the Propaganda College's pronouncement on the subject. The faithful were directed to take the word of the Government for it that the services were not religious. The alternative was petty persecution and deprivation of higher education by conscription. Of course, there is the question, What is religion? Dr. Holtom takes ten definitions (St. James's not being among them) and finds that according to all of them the shrine services are religious. The Japanese denial is, of course, on all-fours with their denial that their present attack on China is war.

Dr. Holtom thinks that this enforced acknowledgment of stupid fables helps Japan to maintain a national unity which is a bulwark against the dangers of radicalism; and yet he hopes that truth and liberalism will somehow win through in spite of this regimentation. He quotes Dr. Inoue Tetsujiro's attempt to treat Japanese religion scientifically, but does not mention that his reward was to be expelled from the university and battered almost to death by patriotic ruffians. But he hopes that "a growing group of historically minded men and women" will be able to evolve a Japanese history acceptable to Japan and to the world. There is no such "growing group." Twenty years ago there was some freedom of discussion. Now criticism can only be whispered.

Only a brief reference is made to the shrines in Formosa and Korea. There they have definitely become a sign of empire. And in Tsingtao and Shanghai and Hsinking and Dairen—and in how many other places in China when the present business is finished?

A. MORGAN YOUNG

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Verve. Spring Number. *Zwemmer.* 10s. 6d.

The second number of this new art-magazine is no less sumptuous than the first. The cover is designed by Braque, who contributes some Delphic aphorisms about his art. There is a paper on English Literature by Gide, and some interesting comments on early Italian painting by Malraux, as well as contributions from James Joyce, Valéry Suarès and Hemingway. The illustrations include some very striking reproductions of the eleventh-century Apocalypse of St. Sever and other illuminated manuscripts; of a little-known Bosch painting of a conjurer; of well-known paintings by Giotto, Utrillo, Ingres and Renoir; lithographs by Masson and Kardinsky; some bizarre fourteenth-century astrological symbols, engravings by the French Renaissance artist, René Boyvin d'Angers; and a number of photographs, the best being by Maywald, Herbert List, Bill Brandt, Hibbs, Machatshek, and Cartier. The magazine is full of lively and surprising objects, nicely assembled for the sophisticated. Extracts from the French originals are given as well as translations.

A Citizen's Guide to Social Service. By J. Q. HENRIQUES. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

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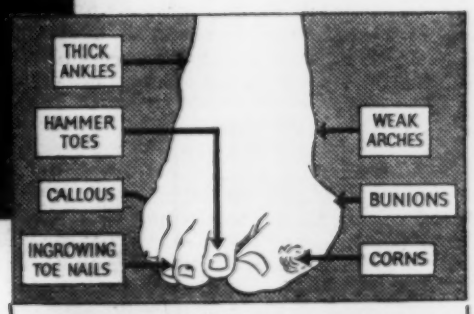

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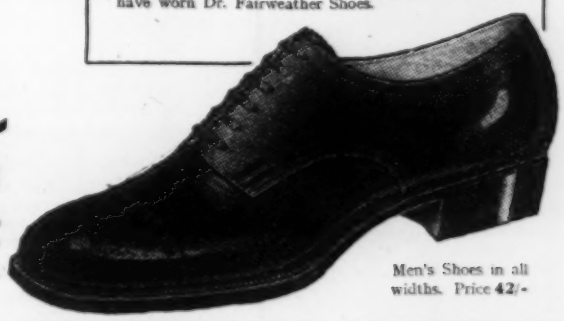

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both statutory and voluntary agencies, intermingled with criticisms from a violently voluntarist point of view. Mr. Henriques has, of course, to admit the need for a large element of State intervention, when services become of necessity too costly to be supplied by voluntary effort. But he obviously hates State action, and, so far from wishing to remove the stigma of public assistance, regards it as the expression of a valid judgment. He speaks of taxation for social services as regrettably narrowing the rich man's chances for private benevolence; and in his discussion of unemployment he altogether too readily assumes that, outside the depressed areas, failure to get work must be due to moral defects, except in the case of old or physically or mentally deficient persons. He does not appear even to mention the appalling lowness of the wages offered in many occupations as a possibly valid reason for preferring unemployment to work on dishonourable terms. Nevertheless, his factual survey is accurate and useful, and he has much of interest to say about the working of such voluntary agencies as occupational centres for the unemployed and "community centres" both on new housing estates and in older towns and villages. His book is well worth reading, however much one may legitimately detest his outlook.

But We Shall Rise Again: A Narrative History of Chartism. By REG GROVES. *Secker and Warburg.* 6s.

The present generation is rewriting the history of Chartism in the mirror of its own convictions. In the older histories, the "respectable artisan," William Lovett, of the London Working Men's Association, was usually the hero, and Feargus O'Connor unquestionably the villain. The newer histories push Lovett contemptuously into the background as a "moral force" idealist, make what they can of O'Connor as the effective leader of Chartism as a mass-movement of the workers, but take him to task for his reactionary ideology and his ignorance of the real character of the class-struggle and find their hero in Ernest Jones, who rose to the leadership only when the great days of Chartism were over, but did strive manfully to hold together what was left of the movement, and did make himself the first popular interpreter of a brand of Marxism to the British workers. Julian Harvey also achieves in these days a sort of half-heroism, as the rather flamboyant leader of the London underdogs against the respectable artisans of the L.W.M.A., and as an ardent protagonist of internationalism.

Mr. Groves is of the later ilk. He writes as a Marxist, and is ever on the alert to unmask the "class-collaborationists" who betrayed the workers by seeking *bourgeois* allies. His history is somewhat simple-minded, and his narrative method at times confusing. But he is good—much better than most historians of Chartism—at sketching in the economic background, and he has the merit of basing his account, short as it is, on a fresh study of the original sources. The result is a readable, rather lop-sided, book—a corrective to Hovell and West rather than a rounded story. It is for example surely absurd to say of Ernest Jones that "his influence was more permanent and lasting than that of any other single Englishman of his time." It is also a pity that Mr. Groves did not trouble to correct his proofs—the extreme case being the repeated mixing up of Feargus O'Connor with Daniel O'Connell.

Where Are You Going, Japan? By WILLARD PRICE. *Heinemann.* 15s.

This book is a eulogy of Japan. The Japanese are represented as the standard bearers of industrialisation, modernisation, enlightenment, prosperity, order and good government to the unhappy Chinese. The picture drawn of China is one that even a decade ago would have been a travesty, and is to-day sheer misrepresentation. In fact Mr. Price cannot help contradicting himself, for, having shown us a China under the heel of War Lords and a people weak, corrupt and incapable of modernising themselves, he is forced to admit that Japan started on her present war because China was daily growing stronger and must be checked in time. We are told that Japan wants to build factories, start schools and abolish corruption, whereas even the Japanese press admits that Japan is fighting in order to smash the reconstruction work of the Chinese National Government, to *prevent*, not to assist, the industralisation of China and her achievement of political unity. Perhaps the most blatant misrepresentation concerns Manchuria, where the existence of so many "bandits" is spoken of not as the consequence of Japan's seizure of this part of China, but as a reason for it; and where, in face of official figures to the contrary, we are told that production and immigration have increased since the Japanese occupation. We are left in ignorance as to whether Mr. Price considers Japan's efforts to debauch the Chinese population with drugs (manufactured and distributed under the protection of the Imperial Army) as part of her civilising mission among the backward Chinese. He never even mentions the subject.

Japan herself is pictured for us as a nation of Spartans without mention of the Helots. The typical peasant is described as if he were a small-holder instead of a rack-rented tenant; he nobly refuses to sell his women-folk to the houses of prostitution when ruined by a flood, whereas the Chinese peasant is shown as doing so in the natural course of things. In fact the practice of selling daughters prevails in both countries and arises from the same causes: bitter agrarian poverty, parasitic land-lordism, and the lack of preventive engineering work against floods and drought. Such ludicrous statements are made in this book as that "school attendance in Japan is ahead of that in America." The author has obviously never troubled to study Japan's own statistics or he would have discovered that an investigation of factory and mining workers a few years ago showed 21 per cent. of the former and 47 per cent. of the latter as either illiterate or semi-illiterate.

Week-end Competitions

No. 422

Set by V. S. Pritchett

"Housemaid's Knee," "Writer's Cramp," "Tennis Elbow," "The Publican's Friend"—there must be other occupational diseases besides these. The usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea will be given for affixing appropriate maladies to any two of the following persons, and for a brief note on the symptoms of each: a member of the Non-Intervention Committee; a reviewer; a dictator; an Average Man; a bishop; an ash blonde; a press lord; a B.B.C. announcer.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Thursday, April 14th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 420

Set by H. D. Waley

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for an inaugural speech, in not more than 250 words, for the Society for Promoting Accurate Enunciation, containing the best collection of plausible Spoonerisms. A few malapropisms may be thrown in as makeweights.

Report by H. D. Waley

The results of this competition were somewhat disappointing, but I blame myself rather than the competitors for this. I ought to have foreseen that Spoonerisms are born, not made. The unintentional is even harder to simulate than the spontaneous.

What leads the luckless Spoonerist to shatter the words of his sentence to bits and then remould them? His blunder is motivated, so the psychologists assure us with some plausibility, by a sudden glimpse of some meaning nearer to his heart's desire which the remoulded syllables are capable of carrying. The essence of a good Spoonerism is therefore that the jumbled syllables should reveal a truth which the original words concealed. Accordingly had there been a prize for the best single Spoonerism it might well have been awarded to Miss M. Chisholm whose President was away because that morning he had become "sullenly unwed."

However, taking general level of performance into consideration, E. Davis takes the first prize and "Pibwob" the second.

FIRST PRIZE

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a solemn pause to curse you. I am the worst fun to speak, and I hope to set the roll bawling. Temperamentally, I adore the bitches of slovenliness and affectation in which so many of the massed pastors of our language allow themselves to wallow; and while in my reverence for the Church I yield to none, I am sound to bay that even our pressed beasts should be called over the holes with regard to their feckless ration of speech. A due phase back I overheard a bishop—a man giving to wombing birds when supposed to gutter odds—actually following his swinal vowels . . . I can think of no sore minister sign!

Even if one avoids the mother asses of England, even at the Louse of Hordes, one meets the same bleak wonderers, the same victims of the humble rabbit. It is up to us to give tattle for our bung. I would go so far as to greet all its abusers with dosed claws.

Lately there has been a revival of the spelling-bee. This is to set the Heart before the Coarse. It is a product of our vicious system of Free Pools for the Score. No true gentleman has ever been able to spell; and in the recrudescence of the spelling-bee I scent the approach of the Dead Ranger or, worse still, of the blooming Lackshirt menace.

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WANTED at once for three months, small furnished flat, Central London. Moderate rent. Box 1470

MISCELLANEOUS

SALE OF SMALL CARVINGS. A few oak bookends, candlesticks, etc., available at prices well below cost. Send for illustrated list to L. W. PENDRED, Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridge.

73 DELIGHTFUL patterns of Redmaynes Cumberland tweeds for Ladies' wear sent post free. Prices from 7s. 6d. yard, 54in. wide. REDMAYNES, 10 Wigton, Cumberland.

A FURNISHING AGENCY AND EXHIBITION, including work by Country Craftsmen and Cypriot rugs, is open at 259b Tottenham Court Road, W.1 (near "Underground"). Information from GERALD HOLTOM, Artist Decorator. Museum 5119.

MOTORISTS cut out SUIT SHINE by using MEDLOCK Pull-over Loose Seat Covers; Soft Spun Egyptian Yarn, 5 shades. Prices from 3s. 6d. Send to-day for free patterns, S. N. THOMPSON, 61 Commercial Road, Portsmouth.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Rates, and all information on page 639.

Bad elocution is not due to speak-wellers. Accurate enunciation is chaste in bastardy of thought and on round seasoning. Therefore, I hold that peach-straining is our neighing creed. If this society does anything to advance it, it is indeed a gassed blethering. E. DAVIS

SECOND PRIZE

It is unnecessary for me to stress here the virtues of accurate enunciation—that would be carrying news to Coalcastle. My object is to urge you to support this Society, which aims at spewing up the screech of our extemporaries to the highest pitch.

The need is great.

Diction in the House of Commons, for instance, is notoriously bad. The hen in that mouse seem almost to take a delight in accusing the Bing's English.

The Louse of Hordes is a little better, but even there speakers sometimes bake the tit between their teeth, with results that make one's stair hand on end.

The B.B.C. is a happy grunting hound for faulty enunciation. There is a growing rabbit of heeding in a slidshop—I should say, slopshid—manner. Even the Official Pronouncers are lax. Their consonants are generally satisfactory, but you seldom hear bowels at their vest.

As for the general public, the people you meet in bains and trusses, their speech is little better than a clamorous barber.

It is our aim, and we believe our high dopes will not be hashed, that the man in the street shall so turn to speak his mother lung that our beautiful language shall no longer be like beet swells tangled out of June. Cutie bawls us to this endeavour, and if we clay our pards well we shall look back to this inaudible meeting as a dead-letter-ray. It would be a catechism if it were otherwise. "PIBWOB"

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 275.—A MESSAGE IN CODE

V J K U O	G U U C I	G K P X Q	N X G U V
Y M E Q F	G U V J G	M G A Y Q	T F H Q T
Y J C V H	Q N N Q Y	U V J K U	K U N W E
K H G T			
T X I I W	A O U Q D	T R Y T W	V H I C Q
T C W T K	K		

The above was set for solution at the Caliban solvers' dinner.

PROBLEM 273.—THE CHILDREN'S PARTY

Solution by Dermot Morrah

The three non-Snogginses may be all of the same sex. In that case the Snogginses of the other sex are certain of their prizes, and, if N be the number of Snogginses competing with the three, their chance of all the prizes in their group is

$$6/(N + 1)\ (N + 2)\ (N + 3)$$

But when this is equated to 1/126 there is no solution in positive integers.

The three strangers are, therefore, divided 2 and 1, and if m and n are the numbers of Snogginses of the two sexes, their separate chances are

$$1/(m + 1) \text{ and } 2/(n + 1)\ (n + 2)$$

Equating the product of these to 1/126, we have

$$(m + 1)\ (n + 1)\ (n + 2) = 2^2 3^2 7.$$

Solutions are $m = n = 5$ and $m = 20$, $n = 2$.

Since the eldest is only fifteen, and there is no evidence of Dionne blood in Mrs. Snoggins, it is perhaps permissible to assume that a solution requiring seven sets of twins, or the equivalent in quintuplets, is not that intended.

The solution, therefore, is that there are ten Snogginses.

PROBLEM 271.—LORD WHIMSEA'S WILL

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: C. E. Webb, "Delft," Tadorna Road, Tadworth, Surrey.

PROBLEM 272.—ATHLETICS

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: E. Boyland, 154 Campden Hill Road, W.8.

Five points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

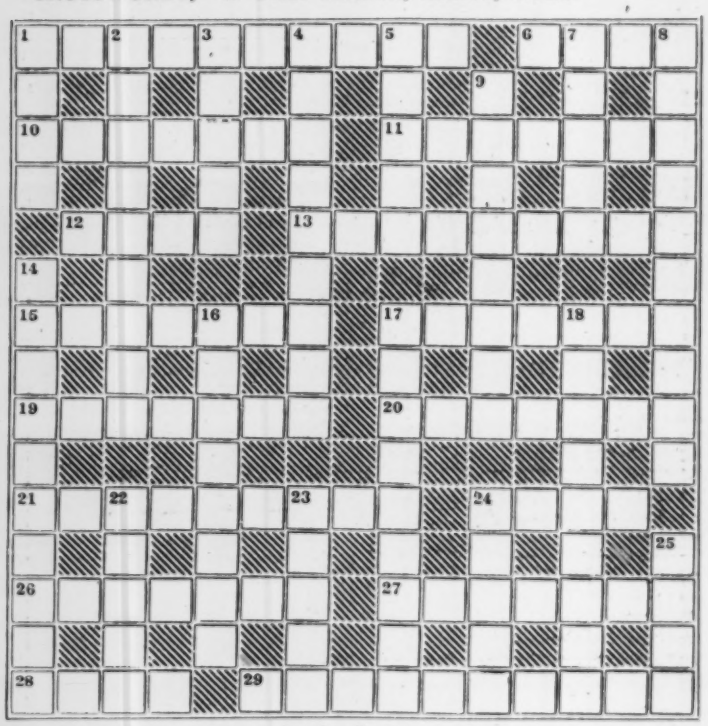
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 422

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
H. J. Drinkall, 94 Hunton Road, Erdington, Birmingham

ACROSS

1. Result of an hourly change. (10)
6. Clean instruction to a Syrian Captain. (4)
10. Flax on both sides of the road coming back. (7)
11. In a reflective condition. (7)
12. Often found on stalks. (4)
13. They have not gone to bed in earth. (9)
15. Suggests a solitary beat. (7)
17. How she and I wander about? (7)
19. Enables one to get a line on the object with a telescope. (7)
20. Where you should run no risk of getting the wind up. (7)
21. Ingredient in the making of rhinoceros skin. (9)
24. No doubt this place is best in Devon. (4)
26, Such a creature would have no difficulty in paddling his own canoe (7)
27. O Left. (7)
28. For this notifies a parting wish. (4)
29. Are they responsible for commercial draughts? (10)

DOWN

1. Tar found in the cellar (4)
2. It is usually pied in December. (9)
3. The clerical one isn't of necessity made by a parson. (5)
4. Temporary fraction. (9)
5. Musical French poet met us inside. (5)
7. In general I enjoy good health. (5)
8. Mountainous route through many a town (10)
9. A test of grinding speed? (8)
14. What litigants lay on the judge's table? (10)
16. A short head on the rocks. (8)
17. Teetotal bar? (9)
18. Vehicular descent from Town. (9)
22. He is like Malory in this. (5)
23. Where to make a stand if wise. (5)
24. Where one might understand. (5)
25. What we walk off with. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

D	O	G	F	A	C	E	D	B	A	B	O	O	N	S
R	■	R	■	M	■	N	■	R	■	R	■	P	■	T
E	G	O	T	I	S	T	■	E	B	O	N	I	T	E
S	■	G	■	T	■	R	■	V	■	U	■	N	■	A
S	O	R	R	Y	J	A	D	E	■	G	R	I	M	M
I	■	A	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	H	■	O	■	L
N	O	M	A	D	I	C	■	T	I	T	A	N	I	A
G	■	■	■	1	■	E	■	R	■	U	■	■	■	U
T	U	T	O	R	E	D	■	O	R	P	H	E	A	N
A	■	E	■	T	■	■	■	U	■	■	■	U	■	D
B	E	S	E	T	■	R	O	S	E	W	A	T	E	R
L	■	T	■	R	■	E	■	S	■	A	■	E	■	I
E	D	U	C	A	T	E	■	E	N	L	A	R	G	E
S	■	D	■	C	■	D	■	A	■	T	■	P	■	S
■	M	O	N	K	E	Y	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	S	■

Company Meeting

VICKERS LIMITED

The 71st Annual General Meeting of Vickers Limited was held on April 1st in London.

Mr. A. A. Jamieson (the chairman), who presided, said (in part): The first feature in the accounts to which I propose to call attention is the redemption of £2,000,000 5½ per cent. Debenture stock. This was repaid at 103 on December 1, 1937, and our company has thus been relieved of the necessity of providing interest and sinking fund on this debt. The accounts show that the net profits for the past year were £1,351,056, an increase of £188,446, compared with 1936 and the directors recommend a dividend of 10 per cent. on the Ordinary stock.

Vickers-Armstrongs, Limited, has earned sufficient profit to pay £863,171 in dividends, an increase of £103,487. The policy of re-equipping and extending the works of Vickers-Armstrongs and its associated and subsidiary companies has been continued during 1937. The works have been fully occupied during 1937, but it must be remembered that large contracts take more than one year to complete and it is not the company's custom to take profits on these until delivery has been effected. You will appreciate that under present conditions it is difficult to preserve the market for all our commercial engineering products. Your board realise the vital importance of this market and constant endeavours are being made to find new outlets for our productive capacity when the requirements of the Defence Programme decrease. During the year we leased the Scotswood Works previously owned by Sir W. G. Armstrong Whitworth & Co. (Engineers), Limited. With Government approval we are carrying out modifications and improvements to make these works suitable for armament production.

English Steel Corporation, Limited, had a record output, all departments having been employed to capacity. There has been an increase in trading profits, which at £1,317,399 are 25 per cent. higher than 1936. The capacity of the works has been considerably extended. Taylor Bros. and Co., Ltd., and the Darlington Forge have had a successful year.

Vicker's (Aviation), Limited: Both works have been fully employed and considerable additions have been made to the plants. The profits for the year were moderately satisfactory. Metropolitan-Cammell Carriage and Wagon Co., Ltd., has had another successful year. The net profit, after taking credit for dividends from subsidiary companies is £222,924, compared with £142,950.

The report was adopted.

Company Meeting

NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY

MR. ERNEST HICKS' ADDRESS

THE 130th Annual General Meeting of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society was held on April 5th, at Norwich.

Mr. Ernest Hicks (the President) referred to the retirement as General Manager and Actuary of Mr. H. G. Wilton, F.I.A., and his appointment to the Board, and in moving the adoption of the report and accounts for 1937, said that last year he had referred to the disturbing events which had occurred during 1936, and he was sorry to say that 1937 did not produce any solution to the many international problems which were confronting us at the beginning of the year. Indeed, the position in the Far East had become definitely worse, while in Europe there was much unrest in many countries, and civil strife still raged in Spain, where, unfortunately, there seemed no immediate prospect of peace. Although the Society did not transact business in either of the two centres of conflict, the general financial disturbance and lack of confidence throughout the world had made things extremely difficult for all large financial institutions such as their own.

FURTHER PROGRESS

Their new business of £11,530,120 constituted a record in the Society's history, being £439,337 in excess of that for 1936, which was their previous high water mark. Of the total new business 66 per cent. was obtained from the United Kingdom, 24 per cent. from the Dominions and 10 per cent. from foreign countries.

Despite an increase in the rate of income tax in 1937, the Society was able to show a net return of £4 6*s*. per cent. on its total funds, a reduction of only 1*s*. 3*d*. per cent. on the net rate for 1936. It had been a source of considerable satisfaction to the Board, while market rates of interest were falling, to feel that the Society's reserves were on a basis which assumed an earned rate of interest of only 2½ per cent., so that even to-day there was a margin of no less than £1 16*s*. per cent. between the valuation rate and the net rate actually obtained on their funds. This basis of reserves had now been continuously maintained for over 35 years.

On the 31st December last the total sums assured (excluding capital redemption policies) on the Society's books exceeded £123,500,000. This, he thought, would perhaps give the best idea of the magnitude of the Society's business, and of the responsibilities which rested upon the directors and officials.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

A woodcut of Culzean Castle, Ayrshire, the property of the Marquis of Ailsa. One of the series of Famous Woodcuts published by W. D. & H. O. Wills.

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W. M. Thackeray—"THE VIRGINIANS."

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BRISTOL: Broad Quay

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

BEARS RETREAT—I.C.I.—CORNISH TIN

THE rally in the stock markets is no great occasion for excitement, seeing that it was entirely caused by bear covering. The bear is a nervous animal and the prospect of the end of the war in Spain, of the signing of the Anglo-Italian Treaty and, perhaps, of a temporary lull in the international crisis, caused him to rush to cover. Perhaps a misunderstanding of the fall in the unemployment returns, about which I have more to say, made him the more nervous. As it was not easy to pick up stock at the lower levels the prices of the leading industrial shares made a sharp recovery.

	Price Mar. 30th.	Price Apr. 6th.	Dividend %	Gross Yield %
Imperial Tobacco, £1 ..	6 17/32	6 21/32	25 net	£4 17 6
Shell Transport and Trading, £1.	3 13/16	4 1/32	20 net (est.)	6 12 3
Burmah Oil, £1	4 23/32	5 1/16	30 (est.)	*6 7 9
Turner and Newall, £1 ..	3 13/16	4	20	*5 1 9
Cable and Wireless ord. stock.	56½	64	4 (est.)	6 5 0

* Equivalent gross after allowing for a reduced rate of income tax.

In the case of Cable and Wireless ordinary stock there was a special reason for recovery as the market believes that a favourable new agreement has been made with the Government regarding beam service rentals. Generally speaking, no new volume of buying accompanied the recovery in prices. Who wants to buy stock at the beginning of a three weeks' account and on the eve of the budget, anyhow? A technical recovery on bear covering seems to be all that the market can hope for at the present time.

* * *

Stock market movements apart, what of the general economic trend in this country? Little enough can be deduced from the mid-March return of unemployment. As compared with mid-February, the total of workless fell by 61,000, but the normal seasonal drop in this month is of the order of 90,000. Employment improved in building, agriculture and public works contracting, but declined in coal mining, iron and steel, metal manufacturing and the cotton industry. As compared with a year ago, aggregate employment is still up by 16,000, but has not kept pace with the growth of the employable population: there are 200,000 more people out of work than there were in March, 1937. From these figures all that can safely be deduced is that the recession which set in last autumn is not developing rapidly—except, perhaps, in the cotton textile trade, which is hard hit by the war in the East and the fall in raw material values. Over the great bulk of industry there is still a sufficiency of work in hand. The ominous feature is the steady thinning of order books—a trend not yet reflected in curtailment of output. Reports from the chief industrial and trading centres all point to the fact that political uncertainty is restricting enterprise; and this tendency is illustrated by the stagnation of the new capital market.

* * *

The annual report of Imperial Chemical Industries is a voluminous document, but not out of keeping with a company having a share capital of £74 millions and assets of nearly £100 millions. The directors, with the help of a chart, explain their new scheme of internal organisation. The day-to-day administration of the business has been divided into six sections, each supervised by an executive director with the help of a committee of three other executive directors. On the top is the new management board which exercises the powers previously assigned to Lord McGowan as managing director. This board is composed of Lord McGowan as chairman, all the executive directors and three non-executive directors. A new "Group Control Committee" has been formed to co-ordinate the activities of the various operating groups and to advise the management board on the major policies of the company which may affect the operating groups. It is hoped that this measure of decentralisation will allow the company to work efficiently and harmoniously. Shareholders, however, will still be completely in the dark as to the relative importance of the company's sources of income. The following table gives the bare record of gross trading profits:

In thousands of £'s.	1935.	1936.	1937.
Gross income	£8,352	£9,049	£10,183
Obsolescence Fund	1,000	1,000	1,500
Income Tax and N.D.C. ..	646	846	1,172
Net Income	6,706	7,203	7,511
General Reserve	1,000	1,500	1,500
Workers Pension Fund ..	150	150	172
Preference Dividend	1,591	1,591	1,664
Ordinary % earned	11.0	12.4	12.5
Ordinary % paid	8.0	8.0	8.5
Carry Forward	30	26	109 DR.

The ordinary dividend required last year £4,284,158 out of available earnings of £5,847,000, so that there is a fair margin between earnings and dividends. Conservative finance is, of course, essential in view of the company's huge investments. For example, the book value of the marketable and unquoted investments depreciated last year by £1,116,000. But in time the directors should build a strong financial position for the ordinary shareholders. Investors will remember that the ordinary shares of Imperial Chemical Industries are low-geared and at 31*s.* return the fairly attractive yield of £5 12*s.* per cent.

* * *

There are so many Government subsidies—direct and indirect—to industry that one more little one strikes me as harmless; and because of recollections of happy days spent west of Penzance I am sentimentally inclined to hope that Sir Thomas Inskip will decide to give financial aid to the Cornish tin mines. With the price of the metal below £170 a ton, they are in a poor way; East Pool and Agar has decided to close down; and unless the price of tin recovers or a subsidy is granted, the industry will be facing extinction. The companies are asking, I believe, for a guaranteed price of £220 a ton, the operating costs of most of the mines being in the neighbourhood of £200 a ton. Given this price, Cornwall could produce about 4,000 tons a year out of the 25,000 tons consumed annually in this country. The present abnormally depressed market price is likely to recover to £180–190 per ton; thus, at a cost of £150,000 a year or less, the Government could keep in being a useful source of tin supplies against war emergencies and save Cornwall from becoming another distressed area. It seems worth it.

LLOYDS BANK
LIMITED

1677

By means of its many Branches, from Northumberland to Cornwall and from Norfolk to Pembrokeshire, the services of Lloyds Bank are available throughout the country. The wide range of the facilities offered and the many ways in which the Bank can be of assistance to its customers are not, however, always recognised, and a leaflet giving further information may be obtained from any Branch of the Bank.

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Company Meeting

DUNLOP RUBBER COMPANY LIMITED

SIR J. GEORGE BEHARREL'S ADDRESS

THE Thirty-ninth Ordinary General Meeting of the Company was held on Tuesday, April 4th, in London. Sir J. George Beharrel (chairman), who presided, paid a tribute to the work of their late chairman, Sir Eric Geddes, and expressed the deep regret of the Board at his death. He then congratulated Sir Clive L. Baillieu, who was away in Australia, on the Knighthood recently conferred on him; referred to the appointment of Mr. C. A. Proctor and Mr. John L. Collyer as Joint-Managing Directors of the Company, and after mentioning that this was the Jubilee Year of the Company, continued to say (in part): Whatever 1938 may have in store for us, we can be thankful that trading conditions for the greater part of the year 1937 were favourable in the Home Market, and also in several Overseas Markets.

THE ACCOUNTS

If you refer to the Consolidated Statement of Assets and Liabilities, you will see that at the 31st December, 1937, the total liability for taxation of the whole Group amounted to £1,144,000. It is indeed a disquieting thought that Industry the world over is staggering under this crushing burden, which seems destined to become even greater in the immediate future owing to Re-armament.

The increases of both taxation and profits held back by Subsidiaries, naturally reduce the amount available to the Main Company. However, in spite of this, the total Net Profit of the Dunlop Rubber Company for 1937 is £1,591,000, and including the balance brought forward from last year of £590,000, the total available for appropriation amounts to £2,181,000. In view of your Company's world-wide interests and the uncertainty of the future, your Board has thought it prudent to strengthen further the Reserve for Contingencies by appropriating thereto the sum of £250,000, thus bringing the total of this Reserve up to £1,032,000. After providing for the Preference Dividends the Board is enabled to recommend a dividend of 8 per cent. on the Ordinary Stock, and a bonus of 1 per cent.

In view of the information given in the Directors' Report, I do not propose to deal with the Balance Sheet in detail but merely to point out the strength of the general financial position. The total Surplus and Reserves of the Main Company have risen from £4,347,000 on the 31st December, 1933, to £5,409,000 on the 31st December, 1937, representing an increase in four years of £1,062,000. The Surplus of Current Assets over Current Liabilities of the Dunlop Rubber Company has risen from £3,193,000 on the 31st December, 1933, to £4,073,000 on the 31st December, 1937, representing an increase of £880,000. The Consolidated position of the Dunlop Group of Companies shows that the Surplus of Current Assets over Current Liabilities has risen from £8,067,000 to £10,361,000, representing an increase in the four years of £2,294,000.

COTTON AND RUBBER

I told you last year that there had been an all-round increase in the demand for the products of the Cotton Mills. The demand increased further in 1937, and the output achieved was a record. The results of the Plantations Company again showed a big improvement over the figures for the preceding year, the increase in net profits amounting to £162,000. This result was, of course, mainly due to the relatively high average price of rubber during the year. 3,415 acres of the immature area—all budded—were brought into tapping during the year. Shipments of crude rubber continued under the control of the International Rubber Regulation Scheme, and we have now entered into the final year of that Scheme's operation. As you are aware, negotiations are at present in progress for a continuation of the Regulation Scheme for five years from 1st January, 1939. Whatever our views may be regarding artificial restriction schemes generally, it is unthinkable that, in present conditions, restriction should be abandoned.

TYRE DIVISION

Despite acute competition, our replacement sales of pneumatic tyres for Motor Cars, Commercial Vehicles, Motor Cycles and Bicycles were higher than in 1936, while in sales of Accessories, Dunlopillo Upholstery and Industrial Tyres new high records were obtained. A prominent sales feature of the year has been the introduction of our new "Dunlop Fort" car tyre, first placed upon the market at the end of May last, and now widely known as "The Tyre with Teeth," on account of the serrated tread pattern which has so largely reduced the risk of skidding, even under the most adverse conditions.

The World's Land Speed Record was once again secured for Britain, this time by Captain Eyston, at an average of 312 miles per hour. He speaks in the highest terms of the quality of the Dunlop tyres and wheels. Out of a total of 836 World and International records 80 per cent. had been accomplished on Dunlop equipment.

With regard to first equipment business, we maintained our share of the potential market for motor car tyres, though there was a slight fall in total volume. The average mileage of our giant tyres on public passenger vehicles has improved by 20 per cent. during the past three years, and the results were remarkable even three years ago. Sales to motor cycle manufacturers showed a definite improvement, as did sales of cycle tyres, which actually constituted a new record for our first equipment business. Our turnover in aeroplane equipment again advanced, and with the great developments which are going forward in aeroplane construction we can look forward to further increases, and provision is being made to cope with them.

Sales of Dunlopillo upholstery continued to increase for public service vehicles, for which the product is now well established, and has indeed become standard equipment. Last year I told you of the rubber wing which we had introduced for passenger-carrying vehicles, and I said that over 2,500 vehicles were already equipped with this. I am glad to be able to say that this year the number has increased to 5,000 vehicles. Our Rim and Wheel Works have been fully occupied.

RUBBER PRODUCTS GROUP

This Group includes Footwear, General Rubber Goods, Garments and Sports Goods, and it is satisfactory to be able to record that all Divisions of the Group showed an increase in turnover, and the profits of the Group were substantially better than last year. This excellent result was obtained in spite of the fact that price competition was more intense than ever. This applies particularly to the Footwear Trade, where we still suffer severely from duty-free imports from within the Empire. We continue to urge upon the British Government the necessity for dealing with this question.

The Chairman then turned to Overseas business and said that in France, despite rising costs in all departments caused by the fall in the franc and by social legislation, their position in the market was strengthened, that although they had received £10,000 from Germany in respect of the profits of 1936, they must continue to treat that country as a closed economy, that the results of the American Company were substantially better, and that in Canada, where their Company had taken up an additional $500,000 Common Shares, following a scheme of capital reorganisation, the Company had shown a profit for the first time for some years. Although turnover and profit had increased he was apprehensive of Japan becoming a "closed economy" after the German model. Profits in Australia, South Africa and India had been satisfactory and the establishment of the Irish factory had justified itself in every way. He went on to say that the volume Export business and profit earned in 1937 both showed very substantial improvement and he referred to the fine spirit of their British personnel in China. He continued: I can speak with equal satisfaction of the service we receive in all our factories and offices, and I would like, on your behalf, to give all those who render us this service a message of thanks and appreciation. Many of you will have seen from statements in the Press that on the 1st January, 1938, the first day of the Dunlop Jubilee Year, contributory Pensions Schemes, covering all grades of employees in the United Kingdom, came into operation.

PROSPECTS

I have now given you a general survey of your Company's operations during 1937. I am sure everyone realises that the outlook for the near future is shrouded in uncertainty. As I told you just now, conditions at the end of 1937 seemed to be tending downwards practically all over the world. The economic background is by no means so unfavourable as it was in 1929, and I think most people are confident that during this year there will be, first, a marked retardation of the decline and then an upward movement, but the timing of these events cannot be foretold. Recent events in Europe and the Far East do not tend towards the establishment of that confidence which is essential to a real trade revival.

In some other foreign countries conditions are in certain respects less favourable than in the United States. I have mentioned the difficulties caused in France by rising costs and the fall in the value of the franc. The removal of these difficulties must depend largely on political considerations, in regard to which any accurate foresight is impossible. It is also impossible to foresee a satisfactory solution of conditions in the Far East, at any rate in the near future. The conditions in Germany, which now includes Austria, and in Italy and Spain, are well known to you. The purchasing power of South American countries is adversely affected by the fall in the prices of primary products. Trade with Brazil has become more difficult since the recent political changes, which have resulted in closer exchange restrictions, and conditions in Mexico some time ago led the Company to suspend trading in that territory. Fortunately, the outlook in British territories overseas is generally more favourable.

Your Company's Organisation has never been so efficient, and its financial position was never so sound. We shall continue to do everything humanly possible to provide against unfavourable contingencies. But a Company whose activities are as widespread as ours must take a long view and, in circumstances such as those which prevail to-day, a cautious view. I am sure, therefore, that you will approve the conservative financial policy which your Board has thought fit to adopt, and that it will be a source of satisfaction to you that the Company is provided with such an excellent shock-absorber in the shape of Reserves. The Report and Accounts were adopted.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

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Further particulars, together with application forms, which must be returned completed not later than April 30th, 1938, may be obtained on application to the Director of Establishments, Board of Education, Whitehall, S.W.1.

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